ELECTRONIC ARTS®

STARFLIGHT

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

GREG JOHNSON

It took Greg, four other guys, and a bankroll the size of Detroit, 15 man-years to finish the first Starflight in 1986. It took Greg considerably less time to redesign it for the Sega. Greg worked on Electronic Arts' humor-award-winning Caveman Ugh-Lympics and created the hilarious dialogue in Starflight and Starflight II.

BLUESKY

BlueSky converted the original version of Starflight into the Sega version. Established in 1988, BlueSky Software now has over 20 employees who blow off steam with rubberband wars.

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This game is licensed by Sega for play on the Sega™ Genesis™.

CARE OF YOUR GAME

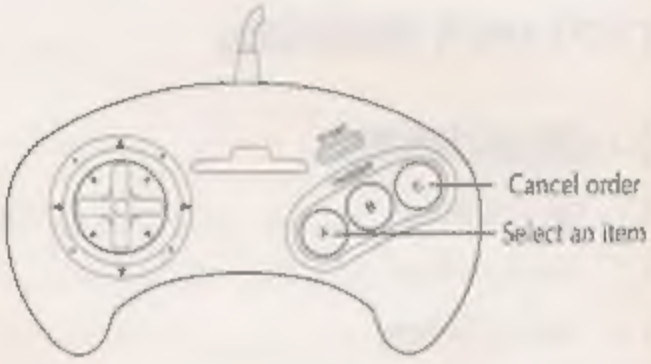
- Always turn the power off before inserting or removing the game cartridge
- Do not touch the terminal connectors or get them wet
- Protect your cart from extreme temperature conditions
- Do not hit, drop, or take your game cartridge apart
- Do not clean the game cartridge with alcohol, thinner, benzene, or other solvents

GETTING STARTED

1. Flip the power switch on your Sega Genesis to OFF. Never insert or remove a game cartridge when the power is on.
2. Make sure a controller is plugged into the port labeled Control 1 on the console.
3. Insert the game cartridge into the slot on the Genesis. Press firmly to lock the cartridge in place.
4. Slide the power switch to ON. The Electronic Arts logo appears followed by the Starflight title screen. If you don't see the screens, begin again at step 1.
5. Press **A**, **B**, or **C** to get to the Start Game screen.

BASIC CONTROLS

IF YOUR CONTROLLER IS PLUGGED INTO THE PORT ON YOUR SEGA LABELED CONTROL 2: DO NOT PRESS BUTTONS **A**, **C** AND START TOGETHER OR **B**, **C**, AND START TOGETHER DURING STARTUP. DOING SO CAUSES YOU TO LOSE YOUR SAVED GAMES.



Throughout Starflight, there are few things you can depend on besides your crew and your wits. But three things are certain unless otherwise indicated:

1) Press **A** to select an option.
2) Press **C** to cancel a selected option or clear a previous screen.
3) D-Pad any direction to move any cursor or highlight.
4) Press **START** to pause and save a game. Remember to SAVE EARLY AND SAVE OFTEN

We hope this helps. Good luck, Captain.

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HOW TO USE TOUR STARMAP WITH THIS MANUAL AND THE GAME:
Your starmap included inside the Starflight package is to help guide you on your travels throughout the Starflight universe. Should you ever get disoriented while in space, just look at your current coordinates and locate yourself on the starmap.

The first, or top, coordinate is the horizontal measurement, and the second, or bottom, coordinate is the vertical.

There is also a starmap in the game that you can look at during play in space. When you're in space, press **C** to see the crewmember menu and select NAVIGATOR. From the Navigator's menu, select STARMAP and see your current position in relation to the universe.

On your paper Starmap, you see several different things:

Solid purple circles of varying sizes represent purple nebulas in the game. These nebulas never change shape or location.

Black outlined circles define territories of different alien races. When you discover which race inhabits which territory, make a note of it on your Starmap.

Multi-colored dots scattered over the universe represent the different solar systems in the universe. Your home system (the one that contains your homebase, Starport) is the white dot at 125, 100.

Continuum Fluxes are "wormholes" in space recognizable in hyperspace by their sparkling portals.

When you enter a Continuum Flux, pay attention to the coordinates of its portals and note them on your Starmap by drawing a line between the portals. Flux coordinates never move.

See section 7.2, the Flux Log, for a listing of all known flux coordinate portals.

When aliens give you a location of something, they may use the directional references UPSPIN, COREWARD, DOWNSPIN, or OUTWARD. These directions are the equivalent of North, East, South, and West, and are marked on the edge of the Starmap.

So who is Robert Silverberg anyway?

He published his first book in 1955. He currently resides in the San Francisco Bay Area. His fans have given him four Hugo awards, his latest in 1990. His peers gave him the Science Fiction Nebula award five times. He was President of the Science Fiction Writers of America, guest of honor at the World Science Fiction Convention, and has authored over a hundred science fiction books and short stories.

In short, he's just your average joe-author.

And if you believe that, we have a fertile piece of desert land to sell you...

The following story was inspired by Robert Silverberg's experience with Starflight. It is fiction and is not intended for use as a cluebook or guide of any kind. A cluebook is included in this manual under section 6 for your convenience.

THROUGH THE TIME LENS

BY ROBERT SILVERBERG

There's an ancient Elowan proverb said to go back to the days of the long vanished Old Empire

Don't ever trust a Thrynn bearing gifts.

There's no love lost between Elowan and Thrynn and never has been but even the most trusting humans are leery of them. My grandmother used to say, "If you have a Thrynn as a dinner guest be on your best behavior but count the spoons afterward."

I suppose it's because the Thrynn are reptilian reforms that we're uneasy. Most humans simply aren't comfortable around reptiles an attitude that stems from an ancient Earth legend about some difficulty involving a snake an apple and the first female human. The snake tempted her with an apple and all kinds of trouble followed. So when we found out that a Thrynn colony on a planet called Athamassa Seven is looking to hire a mostly human crew for a lot of mucky our first reaction was suspicion

The price is too good, that's the problem.

They're only offering basic expenses but they're willing to cough up a twenty-five percent royalty interest for any discoveries we make on their behalf — mineralogical whatever. It's like handing us a quarter of the planet. We had visions of glorious mining concessions that would pour forth

billions of monetary units' worth of promethium platinum plutonium, even endurium — you name it — unto the Nth generation. So what's the catch? We couldn't understand why they'd be willing to pay so much. It was their planet, after all. They claimed and colonized it and whatever was there belonged to them. And why did the Thrynn want humans for the exploration job? Why not do it themselves or send a bunch of androids in?

Well, we were an all human crew. That fit the requirements. Not that we intended any racial prejudice — humans, Elowan, Veloxi, and Thrynn manage to live serenely side by side on our home world of Arth — but it just happened that the six of us all belonged to the same species.

Despite any suspicions we have had about the job, we weren't in a position to be picky.

We six — Mik Gahune, Gabe Vicinanza, Fran Jibor, Nikko Clark, Ned Stackman, and I — had been partners for nine years. Our basic notion was to go into a line of work that would let us tour the far reaches of the universe, see a lot of fantastically wonderful places, and make a bundle of money through exploration and mining. We're still pretty poor, but two out of three ain't bad.

Our last expedition had been a disaster and a half. The rodinium turned out to be a spectrographic error. The planet we went looking for was one of those gravity-trap places where you think you're dealing with the optimal gravity and suddenly discover that you aren't, and the flux that we very

hastily jumped into sent us right down the chute into the Squeeze Zone that lies upspin of Uhlek Central

By the time we came limping back into Starport a year-and-a-half later, our beloved ISS Indomitable looked like a reject from the Galactic Garbage Museum.

We weren't in much better shape ourselves

The bank kindly worked out an arrangement that allowed us to finance a new set of engines replacements for our cargo pods a complete shielding makeover and an assortment of trifling medical work Three joint jobs two limb regrows a couple of optical implants, five sets of teflon platinum eardrums — well you get the idea We were a mess and it took a bank loan of hypergalactic size to put us back together again Now all we have to do is turn approximately nine monetary units out of every ten we earned over to the financial folks for the next couple of eternities — unless we strike something really big that would let us retire the loan a little sooner It's sheer and simple indentured servitude Our only alternative is to file for bankruptcy and go into some mundane line of work among the Groundlings as scanning clerks say, or wiper technicians Anyone who's ever ridden the flux lines will understand why we weren't about to do that There wasn't one of us who wouldn't rather be in hock for the rest of his life than have to endure the daily grind of Groundside existence.

That's why we took the Jathamassa Seven job

You didn't need a mental augmentation implant to suspect

that there was something fishy about it.

But what if there wasn't? What if we were overestimating for once the devious, cunning nature of the Thryn? And what if we could somehow manage to score the big strike that would rescue us from debt eternal?

It was worth the gamble we thought

We found out later that the job was on the board for five months and we were the first crew who ever nibbled at it Well it did look too good to be true and very little that looks that way actually is I guess there's something about carrying a debt that could take you five lifetimes to pay off that makes you do funny things.

Jathamassa was an F-class sun that lay outward and downspin from Arth, somewhere below the 50th parallel.

According to our starmap the system has eight planets The inner four are bunched very close to the sun and have climates ranging from searing to inferno The outer two are very far out and frigid indeed But Jathamassa Six and Jathamassa Seven whose orbits both lay in a central band quite distinct from those of the inner and outer worlds were well within the acceptable climatic range and their gravity was reasonable, so both worlds had been claimed and colonized in relatively recent times — Six about twenty years back and Seven somewhat later.

When the Indom table emerged from the flux in the Jathamassa system, we unexpectedly found ourselves nose to nose with a disagreeable bunch of Spemin pirates who

preferred immediate combat to any sort of parleying. That's one of the little surprises you often get in a galaxy full of intelligent alien races that don't necessarily respect each other's right-of-way.

The Spemin weren't members of the Old Empire and they seem to regard other species as fair game.

A bad mistake on the part of these Spemin because our new shielding was state-of-the-art stuff and Gabe Vonanza our Navigator and weapons man has a 250 aptitude trigger finger. The Spemin subsequently departed from the material plane in a flash and we came out of the short but nasty little battle needing only some minor refitting around the vanes. Nikko Clark our Engineer reported that any competent body-shop would be able to handle the job but our Thryn employers weren't able to help us out. We made contact with Iathamassa Seven and a Thrynn named Vryssh with icy blue eyes and glossy green skin that looked like extremely high quality leather came on screen. He was an elegant creature with the long neck and whiplike tail characteristic of his species. He held himself bolt upright. "We are sorry," he said in a soft hissing Thrynn tone that made him sound not sorry in the slightest, "but we have no such repair facilities here. You will have to make a stop at Iathamassa Six for whatever work you need."

Oddly enough Six and Seven were under separate colonial administrations. Seven, of course, belonged to the reptilian Thrynn. But Six was a joint Elowan Velox operation. Ordinarily you wouldn't find Elowan setting foot within a

dozen parsecs of a Thrynn world, but I suppose the profits they were pulling out of Jathamassa Six were sufficient consolation for any psychic discomfort they might be experiencing as a result of the presence of their ancient enemies on the next planet over.

Jathamassa Six, you see, is the only place in the known universe where nebula jade is found.

Aside from endurium — the near-miraculous substance that makes superphotonic galactic travel possible — I doubt that there's any commodity traded anywhere in the galaxy which is quite as expensive kilogram for kilogram as nebula jade.

A Velox communications officer was on duty when we called Six for permission to land and repair the ship. The Velox officer gave us a chilly bug-eyed stare of appraisal and wanted to know what we were doing in their vicinity.

We never really warmed to the Velox — it's hard for me to take a chummy attitude toward red insects with compound eyes, even if they are a hard-working and highly intelligent species — but Mik Cahune handled the call and Mik knows all about how to deal with the Velox. He immediately adopted a posture of high obsequiousness, an attitude which brings good results during transactions with the Velox.

In a galaxy where humans are just one of many races, you need to keep the quirks of the other species clearly in mind if you want to get anything accomplished.

Mik said straightforwardly that we were here to do a job for the Thrynn on Seven but we had run into a little trouble with

some Spemin and needed to have our vanes scraped and realigned. The Velox seemed to respond well to the obsequiousness but pointed out that Six was a Confederacy owned world and the local Flowan would not countenance a landing if any Thrynn were on board. We assured her that we had an all-human crew, but before she let us land she wanted to run a credit check on us.

That was the last thing we wanted her to do considering the state of our bank account, so while Gahane kneed some time conversing, I got on the subspace horn to our friend Vryssh and told him to advance us enough to cover our repair bills.

Vryssh didn't seem to understand the concept of an "advance."

Matters got a little tense as I spelled everything out up to and including that if he wanted his goddamned job handled at all, he better see to it that our ship was made whole, and we didn't have the mu's to pay for it ourselves.

He hissed concession and said they'd pay for the repairs and deduct the cost from our share of profits, if any. We could bill the repair job — so long as it didn't exceed 8,000 mu's — to an account at the Rock of Truth Bank in Vimpoln on Arth Mk. Gahane passed this information along to the Velox who ran a confirmation on it by sub-etheric wave — the Velox pinch every monetary unit until it screams — and after a lot of long-distance, back-and-forth palaver we were permitted to land.

Jathamassa Six was not one of the great beauty spots of the galaxy.

What you see at the surface isn't solid ground, but only a bewildering tangle of long rubbery blue-green vines thick as a man's thigh, tightly interwoven to form a kind of gigantic trampoline that stretches from pole to pole.

The vines are rough and sticky, with warts and humps rising everywhere, and constantly contract and expand, giving off a strange breathy sound like a sigh of agony.

Anyone who works at the surface travels from place to place over these vines using vehicles that have instead of wheels long thin legs ending in huge hand-shaped clamps. The vehicles make their way around like giant insects, grasping and then releasing the strands of the planetary vines as they pull themselves forward.

A veil of thick soupy clouds shades the sun the whole day long, giving the place a steamy, dismal, oppressive feel. A warm, clammy rain falls all the time. The gravity on Sol IX is light, but instead of giving you an exhilarating feeling it simply adds to the general feeling of instability and gloom.

What passes for a spaceport there is somewhere deep down in the bowels of the planet. You are guided in for landing in the middle of a huge symplexum disk sitting atop the mat of vines, and then the disk rises open and an elevator conveys you, ship and all, into the hideous subterranean depths. Below is all one great, spongy mass, hundreds of kilometers deep. Wide low-roofed tunnels run through it, crossing and crossing again. The walls of those tunnels are moist and pink, like intestines, and a kind of sickly phosphorescent

Illumination comes from them a feeble glow that cuts through the darkness without giving comfort to the eyes. The whole planet is like that.

The spongy underground is the substructure of the vines, the mother-substance.

The vines that spring from it are actually its roots — which reach up, not down, so they can convey moisture to the substructure and carry on some kind of photosynthetic process in the open air.

As for the tunnels through the substructure, they are the work of enormous, worm-like creatures who spend their entire lifespan gnawing through the spongy stuff and excreting rivers of slime. These things have been eating their way through the underground world of Jathamassa Six since the beginning of time, leaving the tunnels behind. They're nothing more than jaw-eating-machines, a couple of kilometers long, mindless and unstoppable. These are the creatures that produce nebula jade.

The Veloxi, seeing how restless we were becoming after a couple of days waiting for repairs and cooling our heels at the spaceport, offered us a tour of the jade mines. I'll give them credit for that much: they treated us decently enough once we had gone through the rituals of friendliness. Their Elowan partners, by contrast, wouldn't have anything to do with us. I suppose because they knew we were hired thugs of the detested Thrynn of Jathamassa Seven.)

The jade-mine tour was — well, *interesting*.

suppose that's as tactful a word as any.

It seems that one of the other life-forms of Jathamassa Six is a huge insect with tremendous golden-green eyes and a great hooked beak. These things use their beaks to inject the worms with their gastric juices and actually tunnel into their bodies where they feed on the worms' tissues and in the process lay their eggs. It takes years before a worm's dull brain realizes that it has been invaded in this way. But finally it gets the news and then it defends itself by secreting a substance that hardens to a stony mass around the parasitic insect, trapping it in a kind of cyst, causing the parasite to starve. The stony material that forms these cysts is the rich, lustrous substance known commercially as nebula jade, which is cut and polished into the sublime jewelry that is coveted on every world of the starways.

A collecting team — one Velox, one Elowan — tracks the worms through the tunnels constantly wading in nauseating streams of worm-slime.

When they find a worm they look for a delicate light, the bright glow of a cyst through the worm's transparent body. The Velox member of the team then uses blades and prongs to cut the cyst out of the worm's flesh. The worm doesn't mind; it doesn't even notice. What is likely to mind is the insect within the cyst which, if it hasn't starved to death yet, is apt to be extremely hostile. The cyst becomes brittle when exposed to the air of the tunnel, and the insect, if it's alive, batters its way out and attacks anything in reach with its ferocious beak.

That's what the Elowan member of the team is there for.

The Velox, it seems feel queasy about killing insects of any kind whatever, even murderous parasitic ones like these.

It's an ancestral taboo of some sort, sisters beneath the exoskeleton, or something. Elowan don't have such inhibitions. They're essentially plants, after all — delicate two-legged photosynthetic creatures with prehensile vines instead of limbs. So when the Velox pulls the cyst out, her Elowan companion is standing by with a laser in firing prime. If the parasite's alive, the Elowan hits it with a hard burn. Sometimes the parasite is faster than the Elowan and then there are fatalities. A good part of the cost of a fine nebula-jade necklace represents the staggering salaries that the jade-miners are paid for risking their lives this way on so dreary and disagreeable a planet as Lathamassa Six.

We spent half a day in the worm tunnels, watching a team of jade miners collect about half a million mu's worth of jade from three different worms. Of the five cysts that the miners found, four contained dead parasites, but the fifth was alive and it came storming out beak-first, chomping as it came.

Our Elowan was quick, though. Its prehensile vines barely fluttered as it cut the immense bug down with a quick blast. The Velox waggled her antennae in an expression of approval. Even if she felt a tribal taboo against killing fellow insects herself, she certainly seemed to admire the efficiency with which the Elowan took care of the job. Never expect a lot of sentimentality out of Velox.

In a few days our vane job and repairs were finished so we paid our bill and left without any great regret.

We called across to the Thrynn on athamassa Seven and asked them for landing coordinates. That was when we found that the Thrynn colony on Seven wasn't actually *on* the planet, but in a habitat sphere *in low orbit around it*. Instead of making a planetary landing as we had expected we would be docking at a small satellite some ten thousand kilometers out. That made us a little edgy. It seemed the Thrynn were sending us down to inspect a world that they didn't care to set foot on themselves.

Athamassa Seven turned out to be a small ordinary-looking planet with no distinctive visual features. Optical scan showed a dull red surface, an endless sandy waste. Mean temperature, temperate-to-tropical. Gravity was on the light side—8 or so. Atmospheric conditions were calm and the atmosphere itself was mostly nitrogen and CO2 with just enough oxygen to remind us of what a habitable world was like. Spectrographic analysis said there was very little water at any. Bio readings were ambiguous: there seemed to be life down there, but not a lot of it, and the numbers were odd ones, hard to interpret.

Great. A hot, dry, dusty desert world!

As for minerals—forget it. At least any that had significant commercial value. Sensor readings told us that what we had down there was a planet made up of light, essentially worthless elements: silicon, carbon, boron, sodium, stuff like

That. All very fine elements in their way, but there's no profit to be had in hauling them across galactic distances for resale. So much for our mining concessions. Goodbye platinum, goodbye promethium, goodbye plutonium."

A worthless planet. And we would own twenty-five percent of it. Great!

"Snookered again," Mik Gahune muttered.

"We should have known," said Gabe Vicinanza. "The Veloxi and the Elowan who colonized Athamassa Six must have had a look at this place too, when they first came through here. And they didn't even bother filing a claim on it."

"But the Thrynn did," Nikko Clark pointed out. "They must have seen something that the earlier explorers didn't."

"After all," said Ned Stackman, the Science Officer, "Six doesn't look so terrific from space either. Who'd ever guess that underneath those miserable tangled vines are disgusting monstrous worms that just happen to generate the most desirable jewelry substance in the galaxy?"

"In any case," I said, "we've signed a contract and we're here. Let's go talk to the Thrynn. No use crying in our beer until we know the full story, alright?"

Navigator Vicinanza handled the docking maneuver with his usual adroitness and soon we were safely coupled aboard.

A dozen or so Thrynn were waiting to welcome us inside the airlock.

The Thrynn may be a slippery bunch of snakes at heart, but

their manner is impeccably suave and cultured. They greeted us as though we were visiting dignitaries and not just a bunch of worse-than-penniless space jockeys trying to turn a quick mega-mil or two doing odd jobs wherever we could find them. They had taken the trouble to adjust the habitat's gravity to our comfort level, which must have meant a little discomfort for them, and though the food and drink offered us was, of course, synthetic, it was elaborately prepared in a way worthy of the finest chef on Arth. Not that most of us were in any positions to judge, but Science Officer Stackman, who fancied himself a great gourmet, was impressed.

"This wine," he said, holding his goblet up to let light shine through the lovely amber fluid, "Surely it's a Mount Clemm cabernet, the 07 vintage I would guess."

Our hosts made little swooshing sounds of Thrynn pleasure, and smiled that toothy Thrynn smile that inspires so little warmth in people of other races.

Their sapphire eyes were agleam with obvious delight at the flattery. Stackman was so outrageously providing. Naturally, the wine, like everything else aboard the little habitat, had been manufactured in the converter chamber at the core of the satellite, but flattery is the lubricant that keeps the gears of inter-species galactic diplomacy from making nasty crunching noises. I asked Stackman later whether the wine was really that good, and he said that in fact it hadn't been half bad. Back on Arth, he would have regarded it as quite decent picnic wine. Apparently, the Thrynn were going out of their way to soften us up for the job that we had been hired to do.

After we took the time to relax and unwind, they got down to business.

The head of the Thrynn operation was a tall, impressive-looking number named Ssspikik, whose rich-toned covering of iron-gray scales was absolutely magnificent from snout to tail.

I looked at him and found myself thinking, What a glorious set of luggage he'd make. Ssspikik took us to a port from which we could see the surface of the planet below and pointed with the tip of his tail.

"Behold, Jathamassa Seven," he said. "A truly fascinating planet, but one which, alas, is a very difficult environment for the Thrynn. Unable to explore it ourselves, we are convinced of the high value of the artifacts it contains."

"Artifacts? How absolutely wonderful!" That was Fran Jibor, ship's doctor. Archaeology is her hobby — her passion, in fact. Her cabin is full of bits and scraps of the galactic past, collected hither and yon — even a little collection of battered, fragmentary objects that Fran insists come from our legendary ancestral world of Earth in the Sol system. She looked excited. The rest of us were something less than thrilled, though, which is putting it mildly. The Thrynn had invited us here to do archaeology for them? Well, ancient artifacts are interesting things, and sometimes the interstel folks will give you a decent price for one, if it happens to light them up the right way. But you stack up the profit quotient of a cargo pod full of quaint artifacts against that of a few tons of

plutonium and there's just no comparison. Things were looking worse and worse.

We stared out at the great red disk of the planet which at this distance seemed almost to fill the sky. We saw broad plains, lofty mountain ranges, what appeared to be the beds of huge rivers, though apparently the rivers themselves had dried up long ago. Then something that had the appearance of a colossal pink stain came into view.

"What you observe passing below us now," said Ssspikik, "is the Living Sea of Jathamassa: a single immense semi-liquid life-form, spanning more than ten thousand kilometers.

Take care when you descend to the surface, to avoid any contact with this entity. It is the obstacle that prevents us from touching down on the planet ourselves."

We knew we were looking at something extraordinary. It went on and on and on as our orbiting satellite hovering over the planet's equator moved swiftly westward. Even from ten thousand kilometers up we were able to tell that it wasn't a true sea at all, but rather something solid, a quivering mass, a continent-size glob of matter of an entity.

Ssspikik said, "What appears to be a pink ocean is actually a gigantic creature with some sort of low-level intelligence.

Or perhaps, for all we are able to tell, intelligence on the genius level. It thinks. It perceives. From an airborne flier you can actually observe its mental workings in the form of questing ripples on its surface, rising in little interrogative quivers — puckered bubbling orifices that come and go

short lived interrogative protuberances. Scoop a section out to study it and all you have is a lump of watery mud rapidly growing cool as it dies. But the thing itself, whatever it is, has a mind. And that mind, unfortunately, broadcasts a constant flow of malevolent energy that we Thrynn are unable to withstand. Half an hour's exposure to it seriously scrambles our synapses. An hour and we lose all vestige of sanity. Six hours is fatal for us."

"But not for us?" I asked.

"So we believe," the Thrynn said.

"So — you — believe —?"

"We have every reason to think that the neural emanation of the Living Sea is harmless to the human nervous system. We have measured the wavelength of the emanation. It is not one on which the human mind functions."

"Ah," I said, not feeling very reassured.

"As a result of the information brought back by our first landing teams before they succumbed," Sssp'kik said, "we have sent android exploring parties to the surface to examine the remains left behind by this planet's extinct civilization. They reported the presence of ancient sites of potentially high value, but were incapable of penetrating them. Androids, of course, have great limitations of intellect."

"And therefore you thought it would be a better idea to send a team of humans down there."

"Yes."

I nodded. "And if it turns out that you were wrong about our immunity to whatever kind of mental radiation it is that the Living Sea puts out?"

"We are prepared to post a generous liability bond to compensate your beneficiaries."

"Ah," I said again.

I looked across at Mik Gahune. He looked back at me and neither of us looked very happy.

I glanced at Gabe Vicinanza at Fran Jibor at Nikko Clark. We were all thinking the same thing.

Sssp kik said. "And what is now coming into view is the feature which leads us to think that there may be great rewards to reap here. Do you see the border between the Living Sea and the land where there appears to be a kind of cliff? Are you able to make out a structure at the edge of that cliff? Here, allow me to show you a magnified image." He made an optical adjustment.

A structure, yes. A ruin, but a magnificent one.

We were peering at what seemed to be a great stone fortress looming like a colossal crouching beast atop a rugged cliff. Even at this distance it looked gigantic, terrifying, mysterious, incredibly ancient. I heard Fran Jibor catch her breath in awe.

"We think it's thousands of years old at the minimum," said Ssspikik. "Millions, perhaps. Certainly it goes back beyond Old Empire times, and it may be very much more ancient than that: a relic of some prehistoric civilization of which

nothing at all is known. Sonic scans indicate that there's material inside that building. Artifacts, we think, of that lost civilization. But the building is surrounded by a security field that so far has rebutted all our attempts at penetrating it. It generates what appears to be a relatively simple matching-code interrogative wave. But the heroic members of our First Expedition who attempted to solve it were unable to retain their sanity long enough to supply the required answers. The Second Expedition and the Third perished the same way. And when we sent androids, they lacked the requisite flexibility of intelligence to deal with the codes."

It made sense. The Thrynn very likely had figured that the Velox, bustling hive-creatures that they are, didn't have much more smarts than androids when it came to the sort of intellectual challenge that getting into this ruin posed. And for obvious reasons Thrynn weren't going to want to strike up a business relationship with the Elowan. Whereas some nice clever humans — especially humans so down on their luck that they were willing to take on a risky job which carried only the most speculative of payoffs.

"Well," I said, with an enthusiasm I was a long way from feeling. "We'll give it a try."

As we set up the coordinates for our landing approach we kept saying to each other in a compulsive way: "Seriously scrambles synapses. Seriously scrambles synapses." With a thick Thrynn accent, heavy on the triple sibilants: "Sseriousssly ssscramblesss sssynapsssesss." Followed by a lot of wild, hysterical laughter. We were really manic. Call it a

defense mechanism I guess What if the emanations of the Living Sea were just as deadly to humans as they were to Thrynn?

Below us, that strange sea was looking stranger.

At close range we could see it was plainly not water at all It had a still texture like some kind of ghastly steaming custard Its surface was rough and gritty There was nothing like surf or waves It lay almost inert pressing up against the shore making small sinister rippling motions

"Anybody feel anything?" I asked

"Nothing out of the ordinary" was the answer I got all around. So far so good

We landed on the clifftop a few kilometers from the edge.

The zone of ruins lay just to the west of us a vast sprawling maze We could see the broken and weathered stubs of giant stone buildings, the stumps of delicate bridges that had collapsed eons ago into mounds of rubble the outlines of roadways long since taken over by the harsh scaly stuff that passed for vegetation here On the edge of the cliff was the great building itself, the citadel, a fortress massive green shot black walls, gigantic stone columns a heavy sloping roof still intact after unknown hundreds of centuries

And now that we had actually touched down on Iathamassa Seven we sensed the mental force of the Living Sea for the first time There was a definite pressure Not overwhelming not lethal More of a tickle than a blast

"You feel it?" Fran Jibor asked.

I nodded.

"Me too," said Cahune. "But it seems manageable."

"Even so, we oughtn't stay here a long time," Ned Stackman said. "The effects may not be as strong on us as they are for the Thrynn, but they might be cumulative. Quick in and out, that's what I say."

"Agreed," I said. "All right. I want two volunteers to go over there in the terrain vehicle and —"

"Me," Fran Jibor peeped.

"And me," said Stackman.

Cahune, Vicinanza, and Nikko chimed in, but they were too late.

"You guys draw lots for the second trip," I told them. We readied the terrain vehicle for its outing. "If you start feeling strange in the head, turn back right away," I warned Stackman and Jibor. "Is that clear?"

"I always feel strange in the head," Fran said.

"Ssserdusssly ssscramblesss sssynapsssesss," said Ned Stackman, and we had a good laugh as we sent them out to have a look at the antiquities.

The risk was that they wouldn't know they were experiencing mental distortions until the effects became serious. If that happened, we could try to bring the terrain vehicle back using automatic override — but it could be too late. I ordered

them to keep up a constant flow of talk as they went, which we monitored carefully for signs of inner disturbance.

"Bumpy road," Fran reported. "Ruts you wouldn't believe.

Uh-oh — an abandoned Thrynn vehicle. Bad sign.

We're moving through a kind of sculpture garden now, not much left of it, and what's here is badly corroded and pitted. Not much museum value. Approaching the big stone building."

"How do you feel?" I asked.

"Terrific, captain!"

"And you, Stackman?"

"Sssackman," he said, and giggled.

"Keep it together," I told him.

Fran said, "We're right up underneath the big building now. It's about forty meters high and solid as a rock. No windows. Ornamentation on the walls very alien designs, strange curves and peculiar angles. Almost as though it's hallucinating into some other dimension."

"Any sign of an entrance?"

"Not yet. We're heading around to the far side now, overlooking the sea. The sea seems a little agitated — surface movement, a slow stirring. No mental effects on us yet. Is that ticking — right, Ned?"

"That's right," Stackman said.

His fake Thrynn accent was definitely starting to wear thin on us.

Fran said, "Ah — here's a gate in the wall. Drum-tight and solid.

And — wait — a light's beginning to flash. High up over the door, some kind of luminescent cell, very bright. Rhythmic bursts — a few quick flashes, then off, flash, off, a few more — now it's stopped altogether — there it goes again —"

"The interrogative code that Ssspikik was talking about," said I gestured to Gabe Vicinanza to jack the audio line into the ship's computer. "The pattern of blinks and darks must be the thing we're supposed to crack," I told Fran. "Read them to us as they come, and we'll see if we can run an analysis for you, and then maybe you can use the voice eraser to signal back at it."

"Will do," she said. "It's off now. Starting up again. Blink. Blink. Blink. Pause. Blink. Pause. Blink, blink, blink. Pause. Blink. Pause. Blink, blink, blink, blink, blink. Pause. Blink. Blink, blink, blink, blink, blink — oh, damn. I think I've lost count. Seven or eight blinks in a row, maybe even nine. Now it's stopped. Waiting. Here it goes again, now. Blink. Blink. Blink. Pause. Blink. Pause."

I glanced over at Vicinanza. He was jotting the blinks down by hand as well.

Mike Gahagne, peering over Gabe's shoulder, looked up and said, "Tell her to count the long pattern very carefully this time."

"You heard that, Fran?"

"Yes. Here it comes. One, two, three... -nine."

"Nine?" Gahune said. "Is she sure?" He was grinning broadly.

"Nine. Yes," came the reply from the terrain vehicle.

"All right," said Gahune. "What she needs to do now is to wait until the next cycle comes along and give us that. Then we'll tell her what signal to give in return."

He nudged Vicinanza, who nodded and grinned.

He began talking to the computer and numbers started coming up on the screen. The two of them were on to something, all right.

Out at the great stone building the next cycle had started. The pattern was the same as before. Fran said, "Three blinks, one, four, one, five, nine. Stop."

Gahune said, "Okay. She should reply with this pattern of blinks. Four, two, one, six, one, five."

I passed it along. Fran said, "It's flashing back at us. A new pattern this time. Six blinks. Four. Five."

"The reply is Three, Seven, Two."

"Three, Seven, Two," Fran repeated.

And then an earphone-shattering scream came from her. "The door is opening! The door is opening!"

I looked at Gahune and Vicinanza in wonder.

"Will one of you geniuses please explain how...?"

"Three point one four one five nine," Gahune said. "Sound familiar?"

I said almost without thinking. "Pi. The first six digits."

Very good, captain. Gold star and merit badge both.

The ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is the same anywhere in the universe, but you need to be a member of an intelligent species to know that. We asked the computer for the next six digits and she was able to supply them. That's all the door wanted."

"And the Thrynn couldn't figure that out?" I said, amazed.

"The Thrynn were getting their synapses scrambled remember?" said Gahune. "You try remembering pi to six places, let alone twelve, while your brain is cooking. And the androids they sent afterward weren't smart enough to figure out that the door was asking them a simple mathematical question. But we were."

"We're inside the building," Fran said, and I could tell from the astonishment in her voice that the building wasn't empty.

After half an hour I ordered them to come out and return to the Indomitable.

They didn't want to, but I wasn't going to risk letting them stay that close to the Living Sea any longer. Besides, the rest of us wanted a chance to see what was inside that building.

When they reached the ship, Fran's eyes were shining with awe, and even the usually stolid Ned Stackman looked transfigured by the marvels he had seen. Visions of fabulous

wealth danced in my head as we unloaded the cargo pickup of the terrain vehicle. But they faded quickly as reality came crashing in.

Abor and Stackman had found a load of junk.

Rusted bits of twisted useless stuff. Perhaps they once had been the components of fabulous machines of the ancients but all of it had long ago been smashed to bits. Fragile metal plates bearing inscriptions worn almost to invisibility. Clotted masses of what looked like wire. Humped-up heaps of crud.

Junk. Esthetic value: zilch. Scientific value: zilch. Market value: zilch. Twenty-five percent of zilch is zilch.

"But it's fabulous to be in there!" Fran cried. "To know that you're walking where some incredibly ancient alien race once walked, before the Old Empire was ever dreamed of –"

"Yes," I said. "I'm sure it's a terrific experience, Fran. But isn't there anything in there that we can sell? Intact sculpture? Tomb offerings? Jewelry? Complete artifacts?"

"Well — no," she said.

We gave the building a thorough going-over.

I went in with Vicinanza — Fran was right, the place was truly an awesome structure, but awe isn't a marketable commodity.

There seemed nothing tangible inside that hadn't long since rusted away. Gahane took a look, accompanied by Clark, and finally Stackman and Fran made one last sortie. By now the emanations from the sea, though they were still faintly sub-

ethal, were beginning to make all of us feel a little peculiar. So we packed up our treasure and took the ship back up to the Thrynn habitat.

Ssspikk was delighted that we had been able to get inside the building, and fascinated and chagrined to learn that the vaunted interrogative code had been nothing more abstruse than pi to a dozen places. When we spread our haul of rusty junk out before him he hissed his appreciation as though we had brought him the greatest treasure of the Old Empire.

I could tell that he was making the same realistic calculation we had made of the market value of this pitiful stuff.

His seventy-five percent of zilch wasn't worth any more than our twenty-five percent of zilch. The difference was that we were broke, and he wasn't. For him it was just a business venture that hadn't worked out very well. For us it was a catastrophe.

"Of course these are just preliminary finds," he said soothingly. "On your subsequent entries into the building you may discover artifacts of even higher quality."

"Of course," I said. "No doubt we will."

I was speaking ironically and Ssspikk was just trying to comfort us. Neither of us really believed that this enterprise was likely to pan out. But we were both wrong.

The Indomitable made four more trips to the surface of Jathamassa Seven.

On the fourth and last trip we discovered the artifact that we

have come to know as the Time Lens.

We d dn t have any idea at first what t was We were work ng n the lower levels of the building beneath the f agstone floor doing some careful strat graphic excavation n the hope of finding some layer of occupation that had surv ved the eons better than the material in the upper reg ons We figured it was our last chance As we dug down we found tems in a better state of preservation than the prev ous finds - still nothing spectacular It was beg nn ng to seem as though the proceeds of se ling whatever we had might at least allow us to break even on the voyage was brooding when Ned cracked open the top of a stone vault with his laser o gger and sa d sharply "Hel o! What s th s?"

A co umn of a r suddenly came whoosing out like a gen e out of a bo.. e Stackman jumped back in surpr se He had stumbled on some sort of insulated container and that air was thousands or maybe mil ons of years old

There was a conta ner with n that one a third crystall ne box with n that W th tremb ng fingers we lifted the d of that one a tt e spherical device made of si very metal ontarn shed and in perfect condition

The sphere was small enough to hold in one hand, with a couple of little control studs projecting from its top.

"F nal y something worthwhile," Stackman said and pounced on it

"Wa t Ned " Fran called "We need to photograph it in s tu, and then we have to " but Stackman was too excited to

worry about proper archaeological procedures. Already he had the thing in his hand and he was pushing the control studs. I yelled at him to stop: what if it was an implosion bomb powerful enough to blow up half a continent, and he had just activated it?

Sometimes impulsiveness pays off, though.

A kind of shield slid back on one side of the sphere and a cone of brilliant multi-colored light came streaming forth. We stared in astonishment as the light coalesced into a tight beam that splashed an image on the wall opposite us. We stared at a series of images, a kind of motion picture. A motion picture that was thousands of millions of years old.

The first image on the wall was what looked very much like a solar system, but a very strange one.

There was a blazing circle of light at its center and around it were lesser points of light that were moving in planetary orbits.

We could make out only two planets, one very near the sun, the other at a great distance from it.

"A two-planet system?" Mik Gahune said. "Is there any such thing?"

"It isn't a common configuration," Stackman said. "But I can think of a few. There's Lempira, Gran Chingada, and Duud Snabeel, I think —"

"Look there," Victanza said.

Whatever recorded this swung around the solar system's sun.

ooped past the one inner planet and headed toward the remote outer one. It took a minute or two for the distant world to come into focus. We gasped when it did, for at close range we saw that the planet was shining with an eerie high-albedo gleam, a shimmering dazzle of radiance that had the unique and extraordinary appearance of —

"Endurium?" I murmured. "Can it be possible?"

"Nothing else looks like that," said Stackman. "Nothing."

I shook my head in dazed disbelief. "Nothing," I said in a barely audible whisper.

It was incredible. A world covered with endurium?

A whole planet whose entire surface was the substance on which the entire technology of superphoton transportation is based? That was crazy. Endurium is incredibly rare. You find a little here, a little there — never very much at a time. But surely the weird gleam coming from the planet's surface could be no other thing. Endurium's unique spectrographic line is unmistakable.

A planet of endurium? Not in the wildest of fantasies had anyone ever imagined such a thing. Was the machine playing with us? Toying with our minds, dazzling us with an unthinkable source of wealth?

"Now what?" Franklibor murmured.

The image was changing again. Another sun, a galactic wanderer, drifting past the two-planet system. The endurium world spun wildly as potent gravitational forces seized it. It

was moving out of orbit, now. Captured by the invader sun? No. No. The other star hadn't been close enough for that. But under the gravitational stress of the intruder the endurium world seemed to be breaking apart. A great dark crack was appearing, suddenly, on its shining surface. Another, another, another immense crevices springing from pole to pole.

"The planet's destabilizing," Stackman muttered.

Yes. We were being shown an astonishing visual record of an unthinkable catastrophe.

Within minutes — no doubt the image was being vastly accelerated — we saw that crystalline shield split apart; we saw the endurium planet riven asunder, torn into fragments that whirled in tremble death-throes and were sent spiraling in a wild centrifugal dance, spinning outward, heading in a dozen different directions, drifting toward every corner of the universe. And then the invader star moved on, its damage done.

We had a final shot showing the original star and its one remaining planet, the inner one, looking lonely and forlorn. Then the cone of light winked out, and we stared silently at each other, too flabbergasted to speak.

What was the little silvery machine's purpose? Who knows? Who will ever know? But it had shown us a moment out of incredible antiquity, a newsreel of the inconceivable past. Watching the images on the wall had been like staring back across time. Which is why we started calling Stackman's little gizmo the Time Lens. We played it again and again and

aga n watch ng the death of the endur um world a dozen t mes, and then a dozen times more, in total fasc nation

So there you have it Somewhere in the galaxy probab y not very far from the Jathamassa system there once was a p anet bearing an incred ble concentration of endur um Sudden y a cosmic catastrophe pu lec that p anet apart and is fragments went flying to the far reaches of the heavens How ong ago? Who can possib e say? A million years, f ve m ll on ten mill.on?

One single fragment of that lost planet would be worth a fortune beyond anybody's ability to count.

We re wait ng for the archaeological reports now We need to know how o d the stone fortress on Jathamassa Seven s Tha may give us some dea of how long ago a this happened Then we go looking for a sun with a single planet in a close- n orbit Once we know its pos tion we can calculate the paths that the fragments of an explod ng planet would have fo owed over the X million years since the catastrophe And then we go looking for the fragments, hither and yon around the un verse And maybe we find them.

The Thrynn are going to bankroll us.

The original deal st ll holds they put up the money for the expenses, we do the work, we sp it any proceeds 75-25 Even 25 percent of an incredible fortune is an incred ble fortune

Do we trust them to play fair with us cons dering how much s at stake? What do they need us for now that they know there are whole endur um astero ds float ng around out there

somewhere?

We , I admit t makes us a l.ttle uneasy deal ng with .he rept tans But that s ust an atavistic prejudice going back to some prehistor c human myth We re sti str ng to overcome that pre,udice And so far the Thrynn have dea w th us n good faith throughout this whole affair

We re t.ing a r. record of the discoveries we made during our Jathamassa expedit on with the Interste authorit es on Arth We want the who e story on the record Not that we don t fully trast our friends the Thrynn you understand But I remember what my grandmother used to say about count ng the spoons after you ve had a Thrynn to dinner at your house Ca l t pre adice, call it caution, cal it anyth ng you .ke When tr ll ons of mo s worth of endurium are out there for the aking and you ve got Thrynn as your hunt ng compan ons you can't be too careful, say I

We expect to be setting out soon on the quest for that s ngle-p anet solar system That s our start ng po nt After that — well we ll see Wish us uck

CAPTAIN'S BRIEFING

Captain, welcome to Interstel. We have heard nothing but good things from your instructors at the academy and we are glad that you have chosen to join us in our exploratory endeavors.

As you know, Interstel is in no position to outfit starships as fully as you might like. Consequently, your success depends on your entrepreneurial ability to generate revenue early on. Spend it to outfit your starship for more distant (and more profitable) voyages.

Your initial allotment of 50,000 MU (monetary units) is enough for four cargo pods, a turbo charger for your Terrain Vehicle, and a trained crew. Cargo Pods are storage units you can purchase in Ship Construction at Starport. Use them to store the large amounts of minerals you will mine. The Turbo Charger lets you move faster over all terrain. We suggest you train your crew with the funds you have remaining after you purchase the pods. Your ship comes equipped with a basic Class 1 engine and 20 cubic meters of Endurium, the highly-coveted fuel that makes all superphotonic transportation possible, so you won't need to do anything to your starship except name it.

For quick and easy revenue, mine minerals found on planets in Starport's home solar system, then bring them back to the Trade Depot in Starport and sell them for revenue. We realize that some of you may find this commercial endeavor somewhat degrading, but it is necessary to earn revenue to complete your primary mission. Of course you are free to follow whatever strategy you see fit.

There have been reports of unusually large stellar flares

recently, and they seem to be getting larger. Please note that anything you can do to discover the cause of and possibly even halt the dangerous flares would be greatly rewarded.

No matter what strategy you choose to adopt, **DON'T:**

- Run out of fuel.
- Run out of energy in your terrain vehicle.
- Run out of money.
- Get killed in combat.
- Land on a planet with crushing gravity.
- Have engine or communication failures.
- Get killed on planets by storms or hostile lifeforms.

In addition, we recommend that you check your Notices in Starport Operations after returning from each journey. Notices often contain valuable clues, and may help you avoid disaster.

On behalf of all personnel at Interstel headquarters, we wish you great success in your missions.

May the Rock of Truth shine brightly on you.

Terrence Willwater,

Director, Interstel

1 - OBJECTIVES

Try to seek out and destroy the cause of the stellar flares.

Apart from any other goals you may set for yourself, two goals are of primary importance:

1) **Gather information**

The more information you gather the more effective your explorations. Talk to aliens, read messages in ruins

2) **Generate revenue**

Interstel offers only a minimum amount of capital at the outset of your explorations. You can generate revenue measured in monetary units or MUs in a number of ways. The following is a partial list. Of course space piracy is frowned upon except in *self defense.*

1.1 Sale of Minerals

Interstel will purchase any minerals you bring back. Some are worth more than others. You must decide which ones are worth bringing back. See the Mineral Value Chart in section 7.1.1

1.2 Sale of Artifacts

Interstel pays for any artifacts you find contemporary or ancient. Your compensation depends on Interstel's evaluation of the artifact

Note: you can repurchase artifacts previously sold to Interstel.

1.3 Sale of Lifeforms

Capture alien lifeforms then sell them at Starport for revenue

1.4 Recommending Viable Colony Worlds

Use the superphotonic message drones in your ship to log recommendations of colonizable planets. When you return to Starport you are given a report on the suitability of your recommendations.

To find out more about how to log planets, see *Science Officer* under *Skills overview* in section 2.2.2.

Should your recommended planets be found unsuitable, you are fined for the work involved to research your poor recommendation.

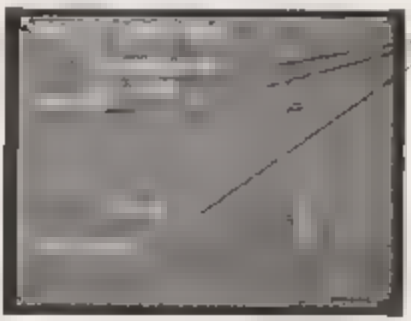
See section 4.3 for criteria to be used when evaluating a planet.

2 - IN STARPORT

2.1 OVERVIEW

Starport is your stepping stone to the universe, the place where each adventure begins and ends. At Starport you can read your messages, select your crew, outfit your ship and terrain vehicle and take care of all pre-launch affairs. Starport consists of four modules and a docking bay. The modules are described in detail below.

In Starport, you can adjust and test game music and sounds at the Starflight Control Panel. To access the panel, press **A** and **B** at the same time when you're standing in Starport.



Look for the cursor at the top left corner of the screen, then:

- D-Pad any direction to move the cursor onto a control arrow or control box; press **B** to slow cursor movement.
- Press **A** to activate the option.

When you're through, move the cursor over EXIT in the lower right corner and press **A.**

2.2 STARPORT MODULES

To enter a module, walk to its door and D-Pad UP. To exit a module, press C.

2.2.1 OPERATIONS

Read communications from Interstel or have your colony world recommendations evaluated in Operations.

Read your messages

Press A, B, or START to see your message directory.

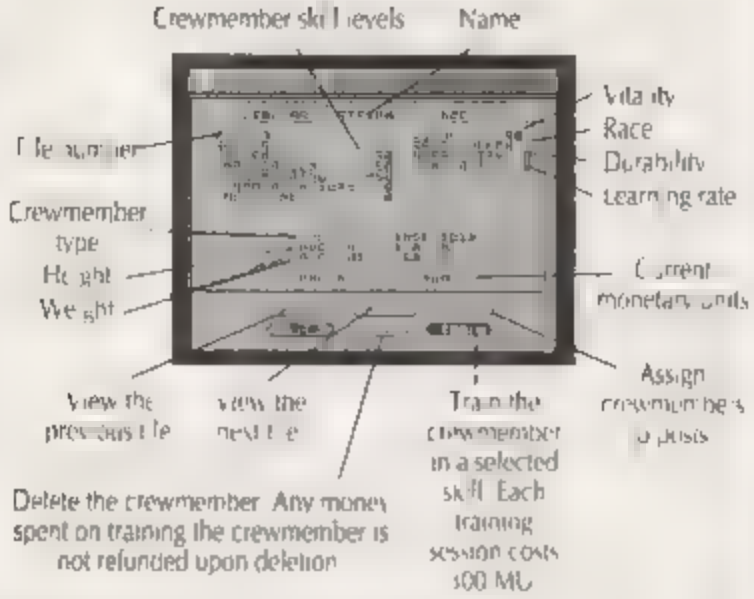
D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to move the gray highlight to the message you want to read, then press **A** to read it. Press **C** once to go back to the message directory, then again to leave Operations.

D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to highlight a message option. Press **A** to select it.

2.2.2 PERSONNEL

To add a crewmember,

1) Highlight ADD and press **A**.
2) To enter a name, D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to select a letter, then press **A** to enter it.
3) Press **B** when you're finished.



TRAIN, ASSIGN, and DELETE affect the crewmember whose file is showing.

To select a post you want to assign a crewmember to, D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to select the post and press **A**.

To select a crewmember to assign to the selected post, D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to select the crewmember, then press **A** to assign them.

Races

Choose from the five races existing on Arth when composing your crew. Consider the following characteristics when determining which races you want aboard.

Learning Rate

The learning rate is skill points a race earns in one training session for any category. For example, the Thrynn have a learning rate of 7. Each time you train a Thrynn crewmember in any skill, its skill level increases by 7.

Durability

A number from 0 to 10 which represents the amount of physical damage a member of that race can sustain.

Inherent Aptitude

This is a race's innate abilities in science, navigation, engineering, communications, and medicine.

High inherent aptitudes make for high maximum skill levels.

See the *Skills Overview* section for a description of the five skills.

HUMAN

Smooth skinned humans are b-pedal omnivores w th scalp hair They are 1 5 to 2 meters in height and are light beige to dark brown They have an interna skeleton and two narrow-set eyes for binocular v s on This race is aggress ve but phys cally weak Humans are high y flexible mentally and are adept at theoretica model ng and application of logic There s a degree of sexual dimorphism in this race but the d fferences are insignif cant

Durab lity 6
Learn.ng Rate: 9

Inherent Aptitudes

Science	50
Navigation	50
Engineering	30
Communication	30
Medicine	30

VELOX

The Velox or Velox are insect-l ke creatures w th two legs two arms and two ntermed ate appendages w ch can serve as e ther They have a hard red exoskeleton two large compound eyes and two antennae which serve as olfactory sensors When in an upr ght pos tion a Velox is approximately 1 0 meters in height f male and 2 0 meters f female Ve ox culture is akin to h ve cu ture and they are not known o be particularly intelligent

Durability 8
Learning Rate: 6

Inherent Aptitudes

Science	30
Navigation	50
Engineering	50
Communication	0
Medicine	0

THRYNN

The Thrynn are a bi-peda , carnivorous, reptilian race Although graceful with long necks and tails they are very muscular and are covered with tough protective scales They range from green to grey and are approximate y 1 5 meters in height. L ke humans, they have an internal skeleton and two forward set eyes For no obvious reason they harbor an anc en animosity towards the Elowan They excel n situations nvolv.ng protocol and dip omacy

Durability 6
Learning Rate 7

Inherent Aptitude

Science	30
Navigation	30
Engineering	30
Communication	50
Medicine	0

NOTE! The Thrynn and the Elowan outs de of Starport are not at peace with each other You can recruit one of each race on board but communication with either race outside your sh p would be severely restricted For examp e, if you encounter a Thrynn warship, and their sensor readings detect an Elowan aboard your ship, they wil likely attack

ELOWAN

The Elowan are a b -pedal photosynthetic race 2 to 3 me ers n height They are w l owy and del.cate with numerous prehens le v nes Their color may range from a ight ye ow sh green to a deep greenish blue They have two arge, redd sh-brown compound eyes Their excellent learning rate a lows them to learn all ski s relatively quick y

Durab.lity 2
Learning Rate:10

Inherent Aptitude:

Science	10
Navigation	30
Engineering	10
Communication	50
Medicine	50

ANDROID

Andro ds are sophisticated automatons made of metal and plast c and are the most durable crewmembers At the same time however they can t benefit from training because their programm ng s hard-wired and their skills are set at a fixed efficiency evel Of the numerous models availab e nterste uses the popular Biosynthetic DX99 ser.es best suited for use n tasks requ r.ng straight-forward computat.on and l near analysis

Durab lity 10
Learn ng Rate 0

Fixed Skill Levels:

Science	50
Navigation	150
Engineering	100
Communication	0
Medicine	20

Skills Overview

All crewmembers except for Androids can be trained in science, navigation, engineering, communications, and medicine. All training is done in Personnel.

NOTE! Crewmember functions are only accessible in space except treating an injured crewmember. The doctor can treat on the surface of a planet.

Science

Ship Sensors are your Science Officer's primary means of gathering information. The more skilled a Science Officer, the more complete and accurate the sensor readings. At a skill level of 150 or higher, a Science Officer can pinpoint alien ship positions over long distances. The more you train your Science Officer, the more thorough your sensor readings and analysis.

Science Officer

The Science Officer is responsible for:

- Gathering and analyzing all information about the status and condition of any ship, yours or an alien's.
- Sensor readings of planet composition and analysis.
- Assessing functions of the various artifacts in your cargo.
- Logging colonizable planets.

During an alien encounter your Science Officer's SENSORS and ANALYSIS options scan and analyze an alien ship. If there are multiple ships, D-Pad any direction to move the scanner target to the ship you want to scan. All ships appear in a generic vessel shape on your monitor until they are scanned and identified by the science officer.

After scanning one ship, press a direction on the D-Pad to select another ship to scan. This makes it easier for you to quickly ascertain whether you are up against a warfleet, cargo runners, or a group of scouts.

In Orbit, the Science Officer's sensor reading and analysis gives you the vitals of the planet you're orbiting.

SENSOR MENU

ANALYSIS MENU

LOGGING A PLANET

One of the primary responsibilities of the Science Officer is logging planets suitable for colonization. You must be orbiting a planet to log it, but several things must be considered when deciding whether or not a planet is suitable. See section 4.5 for more information about good planetary conditions.

NAVIGATION

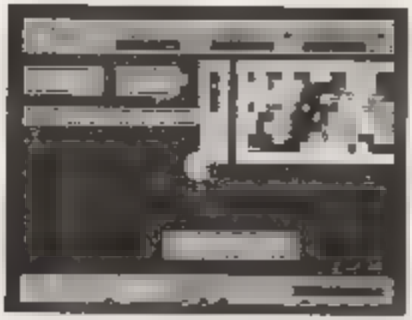
Without an effective Navigator you face the danger of becoming lost in space which causes loss of precious time and fuel. In addition, a navigator with a skill level greater than 150 can find continuum fluxes in space. Enter a flux to transport your vessel to another area of the universe.

A poorly trained Navigator can't spot fluxes well. He may even cause your vessel to go through one accidentally. Navigators with skill levels of 150 or below can't set them at all after transportation through a flux, it takes a low-skill-level Navigator time to determine the ship's new position.

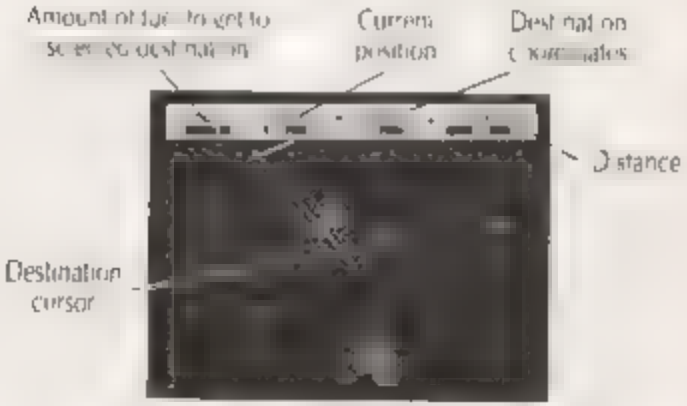
NAVICATOR

The Navigator is responsible for landing the ship, management of the starmap, raising and lowering the shields and the weapons system.

To land, select LAND and press A, then D-Pad the arrow on the landing map to the coordinates you want. Press A to begin descent.



To view the Starmap, select STARMAP and press **A**. Press **B** to remove the information panels so you can see more. D-Pad any direction past the edge of your screen — the universe is much bigger than it looks.



To raise shields, select RAISE SHIELDS and press **A**. Shields use up fuel, so only use them when you have to. Remember to lower your shields after a battle! If your shields are up when you next encounter aliens, they might get nervous and withhold information.

NOTE! YOUR SHIELDS DO NOT FUNCTION IN PURPLE NEBULAE.

To arm weapons, select ARM WEAPONS and press **A**. Remember to disarm your weapons before your next alien encounter!

ENGINEERING

It's your Engineer's responsibility to repair any ship damage. The Engineer's skill level determines the speed and efficiency of repairs. The higher the skill level, the faster and better the repairs. All minerals needed for repairs can be bought in the Trade Depot at Starport.

ENGINEER

The Engineer is responsible for keeping a current list of cargo and repairing any damage to the ship.

NOTE! When you're looking at your cargo list, pressing "A" *jettisons* all of a selected item into space. Only minerals and lifeforms can be jettisoned.

To see a list of cargo on board, select CARGO and press **A**.

To repair your ship, select REPAIR and press **A**. At the repair menu, select the item you want fixed and press **A**. To confirm your order, press **B**.

COMMUNICATIONS

Alien races are your primary source of information. The Communications Officer interprets all communications. If one of your crewmembers is the same race as the aliens you are communicating with, communications are easier and more informative. If your Communications Officer is the same race as an alien you're trying to contact, you have a much better

chance o getting more deta led information and secrets

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

The Communication Officer is responsible for communications with alien lifeforms and sending distress signals to Interstel during an emergency

To hail an alien ship, select HAIL and press **A**. Choose a posture you want to address the aliens with (OBSEQUIOUS, FRIENDLY or HOSTILE, then choose what you want to say. Ask hostile questions, state intentions of friendship, or grovel for information. For suggested postures with the different alien races, see the color pictures near the middle of this manual.

To send a distress signal, select DISTRESS and press **A**. Interstel retrieves you and your ship and brings you back to Starport for evaluation. If you sent a distress signal because you are out fuel, remember to refuel at the Trade Depot before you leave.

NOTE! Aliens usually block distress calls during battle, so don't expect help in the middle of a melee.

NOTE! Send a distress signal only in an emergency. Interstel charges a heavy fine for retrieval.

MEDICINE

Your Doctor's skill level determines the speed and efficiency of his medical treatment. The higher the skill level, the less time it takes to treat a wound. All injuries heal naturally over time at a rate proportional to the Doctor's skill level.

DOCTOR

The ship's doctor is responsible for examining and treating injured crewmembers. The higher the doctor's skill level, the

faster the cure

To treat an injured crewmember,

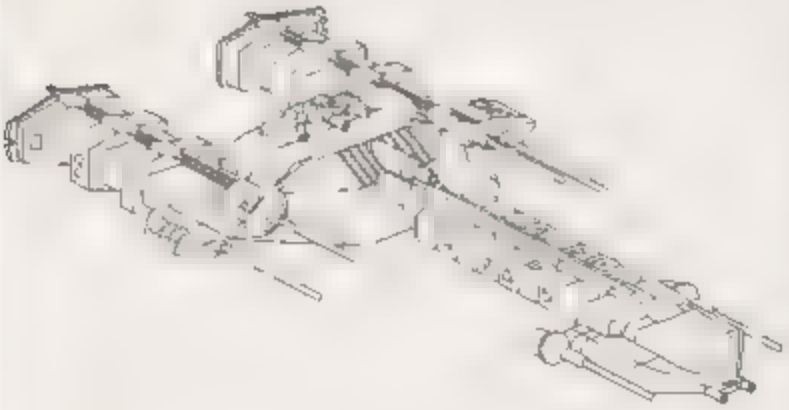
1 Press **A** at the doctor's menu

2 Select the crewmember you want treated and press **A**

3) Press **B** to treat

NOTE! If a crewmember's health reaches 0 he cannot be healed

THE STARSHIP



2.2.3 Ship Construction

In the Ship Construction garage, build and upgrade your ship, sell parts of it for revenue, repair a damaged item, name your ship, and outfit your Terrain Vehicle.

NOTE! To upgrade any item on the ship except weapons, you must first sell your old one, then buy a better one.

To buy, sell, or repair a part of the ship,

1. D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight BUY, SELL, or REPAIR and press **A**.
2. Highlight an item and press **A**.
3. Press **B** to confirm your decision.
   Press **C** to erase any changes made to your ship.

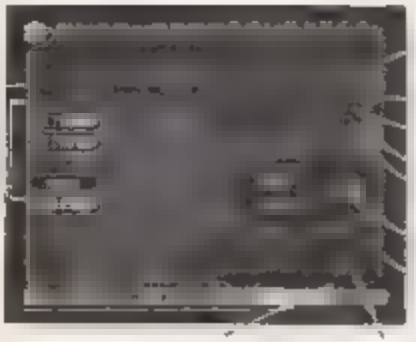
To name your ship,

1. D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight NAME, then press **A**.
2. D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to highlight the letter you want to enter, then press **A**.
3. Press **B** when you're done.

To outfit your Terrain Vehicle,

- D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight TV (terrain vehicle) and press **A**.
  This brings you to the Terrain Vehicle construction garage. See *The Terrain Vehicle* section for instructions about outfitting and upgrading it.

THE SHIP



Cargo Pods each hold 50 cubic meters of cargo and cost 500 MU. Your initial cargo capacity is very small so buy pods before you leave Starport for the first time for more productive mining.

NOTE: Available cargo space is based on total cargo pods minus endurium (fuel).

NOTE! Even if you do not purchase enhancements to the systems below, the systems themselves could get damaged in combat or bad landings. Never let any of the ship's systems reach 0, unless you have plenty of MU's to spend.

Engines are available in five classes ranging from Class 1 (1 000 MU) to Class 5 (100 000 MU). The higher the class, the better the fuel efficiency and acceleration.

NOTE! If at any time your engines don't work, and you have fuel, have your Engineer check them for damage.

Shields provide protection during combat and range from Class 1 (4,000 MJ) to Class 5 (125,000 MJ). The higher the class, the more effective they are against enemy weapons. Your Navigator is responsible for raising and lowering them. Shields slowly drain fuel when activated.

Armor provides extra protection during combat, but can't be repaired and must be replaced at Starport. Armor comes in five classes ranging from Class 1 (1,500 MJ) to Class 5 (25,000 MJ).

Weapons come in all strengths. They range from the 1000 MJ Pulse Cannon, to the 45,000 MJ Phaser. Once you buy a weapon, it is represented by a letter (see below) in the WEAPONS section above the picture of your ship.

Weapons available at Starport are:

Pulse Cannon (C)

Tri-Cannon (3)

Buzz Bombs (Z)

Fusion Blaster (F)

Photon Torpedo (T)

Lance (L)

Twin-Beam (B)

Phaser (P)

The Terrain Vehicle

To get to the Terrain Vehicle garage,

- D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight TV (terrain vehicle) and press **A**

The Terrain Vehicle is vital to your mission. Should you let it run out of fuel when you are mining and exploring on a planet, you must return to Starport to get a new one. Your

new TV will be stripped and you will have to restock its features.

NOTE! If you did not equip your Terrain Vehicle with Pontoons in Starport you'll last underwater for about six seconds

To buy or sell an item,

1. D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight BUY or SELL and press **A**
2. D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight the item you want to buy or sell and press **A**
3. Press **B** when you're done

   The items should appear in a list above the picture of your Terrain Vehicle and the picture should change to show the new equipment

To get back to the Ship,

- D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight SHIP and press **A**
- Press **C** to leave Ship Construction

2.2.4 Trade Depot

At the Trade Depot you can buy or sell minerals and artifacts. This is the only place to buy endurium (the fuel for your ship).

To buy or sell something,

1. D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to highlight BUY or SELL, then press **A**

   When you highlight BUY and press **A**, the Depot immediately figures the maximum you can afford and offers you that. Buy it only if you want to spend all of your money.

2 D-Pad **DOWN** to highlight an item, then press **A** to select it.

If you bought or sold an artifact and you're finished, press **C** to leave the Trade Depot.

If you want to buy or sell a mineral, the amount you can afford appears. If you want to spend all your remaining MU on a mineral, press **A**. If not, enter the amount you want to buy or sell.

3 D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to move the cursor.

4 D-Pad **UP** or **DOWN** to enter an amount.

5 Press **A** to approve the amount.

6 Press **B** when you're done.

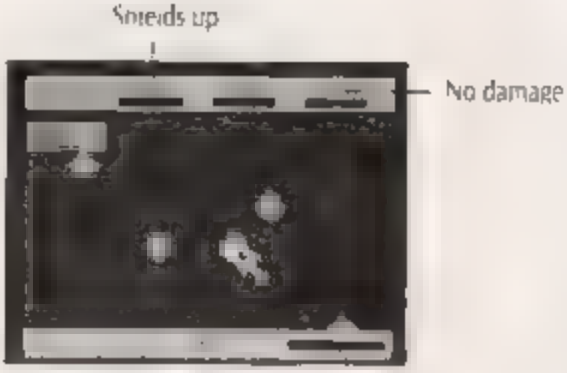
For values of minerals, see the Mineral Value Chart in section 7.1.1.

2.2.5 Docking Bay

Embark on your history-making voyages from the Docking Bay in Starport. When you are ready to leave, you don't have to walk to the Docking Bay doors. Anytime you're in the main hallway at Starport, press **C** to go directly to the Docking Bay, then **A** to launch. Good luck, Captain.

3 - FLYING

3.1 SPACE



To fly your ship in space,

- D Pad **RIGHT** to rotate your ship clockwise
- D-Pad **LEFT** to rotate your ship counter-clockwise
- D-Pad **UP** for thrust forward

For information about how to fly your ship over a planet's surface, see section 4.1

To give orders to crewmembers, press **C** at anytime in space to bring up the crewmember menu

3.1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

HYPERSPACE

This is where interstellar travel occurs. When you are in Hyperspace you can see solar systems recognizable in Hyperspace as a bright four-pointed star, sparkling patches of stars called continuum fluxes and purple nebulae.

To enter a solar system,

1) Maneuver to a solar system
2) Press **A** to confirm entry

Continuum fluxes are like worm holes in space and are recognizable by their sparkling portals. They teleport you to different coordinates somewhere on the starmap. Origins and destinations of the fluxes are listed in the Captain's Log at the end of this manual. Use the Starmap that came with the game to log continuum fluxes as you travel through them.

To enter a flux, just fly into it.

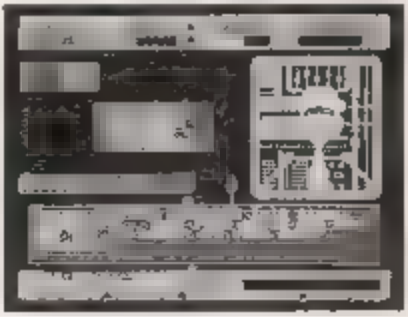
ORBITING A PLANET

To establish orbit, fly close to a planet and let its gravity pull you in, then D-Pad **UP** and **RIGHT**, or **UP** and **LEFT** when you are over the planet's center. Sometimes getting pulled in by the planet's gravity automatically establishes orbit.

To break orbit, press **A** and D-Pad **UP**.

When you're ready to land, go to your navigator's menu, select LAND, and press **A**. For more information about landing, see section 4.1.

3.1.2 ENCOUNTERS WITH ALIENS



When you first encounter aliens, their ships all look alike until your Science Officer takes a sensor reading. When the type of ship has been identified, you can see the ship in its natural form.

NOTE! During an encounter, an alien ship can scan your ship and detect shields and weapon status. If your shields are up and weapons armed, you may be interpreted as hostile.

ALIEN TYPES

For descriptions of alien types already discovered by Interstellar turn to the color renderings by Fifth Admiral Okamoto in the middle of this manual.

COMMUNICATIONS

To establish communication,

1. Press **C** to bring up the crewmembers menu.
2. Select COMMUNICATIONS then press **A**.
3. Select HAIL then press **A**.

   NOTE! If aliens communicate with you first, the communication officer's menu displays RESPOND instead of HAIL.
4. Select a posture to communicate with, press **A** to communicate, then press **C** to clear the message from your screen.

Remember, you're dealing with aliens. Different alien races respond differently to each posture. For suggested postures with individual races, see the color pictures and Cultural Notes near the middle of this manual.

Obsequiousness communicates subservience and submissiveness. If you choose this posture, an alien race

may think you worship them.

Friendliness is usually a safe bet. It's easier to get an initial feel for a race and a little information when you begin communications with a friendly posture.

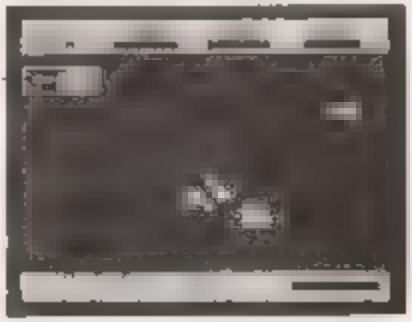
Hostility could get you a lot of information from a meek race. Then again, it could get you blown to bits.

Experiment with different postures until you discover the most effective approach for each race. Make notes of any information you receive during each encounter, including information on the success or failure of a particular posture. Once you develop friendly relations with a race, they remember you and respond well to inquiry.

Encounters with different members of the same race yield different information. Treat each encounter as an unopened treasure chest.

Combat

Weapon in use



Attacking an alien race often hinders information gathering. In most cases, it pays to be friendly.

Some alien vessels are impervious to certain kinds of weapons, so even a direct hit may amount to nothing against a vessel immune to that kind of weapon.

To enter combat, order your Navigator to raise the shields and arm the weapons!

1. Select NAVIGATOR from the crewmember menu then press **A**.
2. Select RAISE SHIELDS then press **A**.
3. Get back into the NAVIGATOR menu, select ARM WEAPONS, then press **A**.

   Press **B** to cycle through your weapons if you have more than one.
4. When you're ready, press **A** to fire.

   NOTE! Firing any weapon uses up fuel. Flying during the encounter does not.

When you destroy all alien ships, you can:

- Press **B** to leave the encounter.
- Press **C** to stay in the encounter so you can pick up debris.

To pick up debris when you destroy an alien spacecraft, press **C** to stay in the encounter. Then fly over the wreckage to pick up any minerals left after the blast.

Remember to lower your shields and disarm your weapons immediately after combat ceases. If you encounter another alien race with your defenses up, they may consider you hostile and attack without responding to communication.

3.1.3 Saving a Game

You can only save a game when you're in Starport or flying in space. You can save up to two games at a time.

To save a game,

1) Press **START**

2 Select SAVE AS GAME 1 or SAVE AS GAME 2 and press **A**

If you have saved a game as Game 1 already saving a different game as Game 1 will overwrite (erase) the old saved game

3 Press **A** to save a game **C** to cancel

4 Press **C** or select RESUME to resume game

4 - ON A PLANET

4.1 LANDING

To land, you must first establish orbit around a planet

To establish orbit,

1. Fly close to a planet and let its gravity pull you in
2. D-Pad **UP** and **RIGHT**, or **UP** and **LEFT** to begin orbiting

   The ship's computer lets you know when you're locked into orbit

To land,

1. Press **C** to bring up the crewmember's menu
2. Select NAVIGATOR and press **A**
3. Select LAND and press **A**

Planet surface map

Your Navigator presents you with a map of the planet's surface so you can choose landing coordinates

To choose your landing coordinates

3. D-Pad any direction to move the cursor on your map to the place you want to land

4. Press **A** to begin descent
5. As you fall toward the planet, press **A** for vertical thrust to slow your descent
6. D-Pad **RIGHT** or **LEFT** to turn the ship
7. Press and release **A** until you're close to the ground

   At this point you may want to fly low over the terrain to visually search for outcroppings or ruins. D-Pad **UP** for forward thrust and press **A** to adjust altitude as you scan the terrain
8. Release **A** to touch down

4.2 On the Surface

Mining minerals is the best way to build up initial revenue. Use the Hyperlaser in your Terrain Vehicle to dig through dirt and mineral deposits. For instructions about how to mine, see section 4.2.2. For a list of minerals, see section 7.1.1.

Some minerals show above ground. These are called "outcroppings." Your Terrain Vehicle's scanner represents these as a crossed pick and shovel. To pick up these minerals, just drive over them.

20 creature-types exist on the surfaces of planets, but you'll have to explore to find them. Capture a few and take them back to Starport. Their resale value in the Trade Depot can be surprising! For a list of creatures see the Lifeform Chart in section 7.1.2.

Search for artifacts among ancient ruins. Powerful artifacts exist among the ruins scattered around the universe by the Ancients. Search ruins to find information and artifacts to forward your cause.

Don't run out of fuel! Each time you do a mineral scan you use 10 units of fuel, so watch your fuel indicator!

If you end up stranded on a planet with no way out, you can send a distress call, but be prepared to pay!

4.2.1 Moving on Terrain

Why wait? Begin exploring as soon as you touch down. BUT:

- Don't run out of fuel in your Terra-n Vehicle. Emptying the TV of the ruins' engine and destroys it. You'll have to go back to Starport and pay a fine for a new one.

If you can find the Flat Device, an artifact of great strength, running out of fuel in the Terrain Vehicle would never be a problem

- Don't attempt to cross water unless your terrain vehicle has pontoons allowing it to float. If you do submerge GET OUT AS FAST AS YOU CAN. Unfortunately most control of the vehicle is lost underwater

To embark in the Terrain Vehicle,

1) Press **C** and select DISEMBARK
2) Press **A** to confirm and lower your Terrain Vehicle from the ship

To drive your Terrain Vehicle,

- D-Pad **UP** to move it forward
- D-Pad **RIGHT** to turn it clockwise
- D-Pad **LEFT** to turn it counter-clockwise

During an earthquake, high winds, or tornados, dig in for stability.

To dig in,

- Press **B** four times in a row in soft dirt.

  If you press three times, then hit rock (a high "bang" sound) you won't dig in, and you'll have to move to more dirt and try again

When you are dug in the letter "D" appears next to your current coordinates

When you're in the Terrain Vehicle you have several options. Press **C** to bring up the options menu

Mineral Scan initiates a scan for minerals over the surface within your view screen. Minerals underground appear in various patches of shades ranging from light yellow to red. **Light yellow** indicates a high density of minerals. **Red** indicates a low density. REMEMBER each time you do a mineral scan, it uses 10 units of fuel.

NOTE! You can't move during a mineral scan, so save fuel by studying each scan carefully and remember where patches are located.

To do a mineral scan,

1) Select MINERAL SCAN and press **A**.

2) Press **C** to leave the scan.

Map shows the surrounding area from higher up. It gives you a bird's eye view.

To see the map,

1) Select MAP and press **A**.

2) Press **C** to leave the view.

Inventory lists all minerals and inventory currently in the Terrain Vehicle. Every time you re-embark to the mother ship the Terrain Vehicle is refueled and all cargo except artifacts are transferred to the mother ship.

To see a list of the Terrain Vehicle's inventory,

1. Select INVENTORY and press **A**.

2. Press **C** to leave the inventory.

Treat any injured crewmember planetside. Crewmembers may get hurt in earthquakes or by a hostile lifeform.

To treat an injured crewmember,

1) Select TREAT and press **A**

   A list of your crewmembers and their health percentages appears.

2 D-Pad **LEFT** or **DOWN** to select the crewmember to treat

3 Press **A** to treat or **C** to cancel treatment order

4 Press **B** when you're finished

Embark puts the Terrain Vehicle back on the mothership.

To Embark,

1 Maneuver the TV under the ship

2 Select EMBARK and press **A**

4.2.2 MINING

Mining planets is an excellent way to make some quick cash. To make your mining more lucrative, Starport recommends the following:

1 Select MINERAL SCAN from the options menu and press **A**

Note the locations of the patches of minerals!

REMEMBER: You cannot move during mineral scans.

2 Press **C** to leave the scan

3 Drive to where the mineral patches appeared and press **B** to dig

Usually you can carry as much minerals as your TV cargo pods can hold, but occasionally Starport's market for minerals is low. In this case, your ship and TV will

automatically stop picking up minerals. You can buy extra cargo space in Starport.

There are seven layers of dirt or minerals covering each planet. It's possible to dig seven times in the same spot and hit mineral on the seventh dig. You could mine in a pattern like:

CHUFF-CHUFF-DING! DING! CHUFF! DING! CHUFF-BANG!

In the above pattern you hit minerals on the third, fourth, and sixth digs; dirt on the first, second, fifth, and seventh digs; and rock on the eighth. You always hit rock on the eighth dig.

Listen to the three different sounds of digging:

- **Chuffs** are the sounds of digging in dirt or rock. Chuffs sounds like a soft knock. Four chuffs in a row and you're Terran. Vendetta's digging against high winds and earthquakes.
- **Bangs** are the sounds of hitting rock. A Bang sounds like a hard knock.
- **Dings** mean you've struck mineral. A high pitched echoing sound accompanies your find along with an information box telling you which kind of mineral and how much of it you've found.

4.2.3 Collecting Specimens

The Science Department at Interstellar is always looking for a new specimen. For bonus MUs, collect land creatures and research them at the Starport Trade Depot.

The Creatures

Audio recordings of the ancients have led us to believe that 20 different kinds of creatures exist over all planets. We only

have names of the creatures — we're depending on you for visual descriptions.

To collect a creature,

1. Shoot at it once or twice from your terran vehicle to stun it. some creatures may require more shots to stun them, but too many shots may heavily damage it and make it worthless or kill it altogether.
2. When the creature has stopped moving, drive over it to pick it up.
3. Once you have it, check your inventory to see what is called then log it in the Lifeform Chart in section 7.1.2.

4.3 Planetary Colonization Conditions

Recommending a planet for colonization is serious business. If you recommend an uninhabitable planet to Interstel, you will be heavily fined. Interstel has recommended the following guidelines when judging the habitability of a planet.

NOTE! A planet may be suitable in a number of ways but may have just one feature that makes it untenable as a colony world.

4.3.1 Temperature

A good temperature is hard to find. Arctic, Temperate and Tropical climates are usually your best bets.

4.3.2 Gravity

Gravity must be below 2.0 g's for a planet to be suitable for colonization. 0.7 to 1.3 is optimal.

4.3.3 Atmosphere

The planet must have an atmosphere that contains Oxygen

4.3.4 Hydrosphere

A hydrosphere (otherwise known as water content) must exist for the planet to be colonizable

4.3.5 Global Weather

Planets with violent or very violent atmospheric activity are unacceptable. The following is a list of the different atmospheres on planets

NONE

CALM

MODERATE

VIOLENT

VERY VIOLENT

4.3.6 Bio-Density

Bio-Density is the measurement of how much life is on any given planet. A high Bio-Density is a plus, but not necessary

4.3.7 Minerals

Planets with abundant mineral deposits make excellent self-supporting colonies. Consider mineral abundance when logging a planet, but don't let a low-mineral planet with other beneficial aspects go unnoticed

5-ATTENTION FIRST-TIME CAPTAINS

This guide through your first adventure assumes that you understand basic controls. Begin in Starport.

5.1 GET YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Walk LEFT to Operations (the first door) and enter. When inside, press **A** twice to get your first assignment. Press **A** to page through it and when you're done press **C** to exit to the message directory, then press **C** again to exit Operations.

5.2 CHOOSE YOUR CREW

1. **Walk to Personnel (the second door) and enter.** ADD lets you add a crewmember to your crew. ADD is already selected when you enter so just press **A** to choose it.
2. **Enter a crewmember's name** then press **B**. Select a race you want them to be and press **A**. For information about the strengths and weaknesses of the individual races see section 2.2.2 Personnel.
3. **Select ADD and repeat step 2 for each crewmember you want to add.** You can have up to five on your ship.

NOTE! As you know, the Thrynn and the Elowan are not at peace with each other. You can recruit one of each race on board, but communication with either race outside your ship would be severely restricted. For example, if you encounter a Thrynn warship, and their sensor readings detect an Elowan aboard your ship, they will likely attack.

5.3 TRAIN YOUR CREW

To train your crew,

1 To bring up the file of the crewmember you want to train, select NEXT or PREV (previous) and press **A**.

2 When you come to the file you want, select TRAIN and press **A**.

3 Select the skill your want to train the crewmember in and press **A** to train them once. Press **A** to give them another lesson.

Crewmembers' skills increase according to their learning rate.

NOTE! Androids are preprogrammed and cannot learn.

With a highly skilled crew, wounds heal faster, ship repairs are quicker, navigation and flying is easier, and planet and lifeform analysis is more accurate. Train your crew well, but leave yourself enough MU to buy cargo pods at your next stop, Ship Construction.

5.4 ASSIGN POSTS TO YOUR CREW

You cannot leave Starport without assigning posts to your crew.

To assign crewmembers to posts,

1 Select ASSIGN and press **A**.

The crew assignment menu appears.

2 Highlight the post you want to assign someone to (Science Officer for example), and press **A**.

Next, move the highlight through the crew names. Each

crewmember s t le appears. Fill the Science Officer's post w th the crewmember with the highest sk l eve Sc ence

3) Highlight a crewmembers name and press **A.**

Repeat this step for each post you need to assign.

4) Press **B** when you're done

5) Press **C** to leave Personnel.

5.5 BUY CARGO PODS

Walk into the Ship Construction garage (the third door)

First buy some cargo pods. They make your mining exped t ons more lucrat ve just because you have more room to co lect m nerals

1 BUY s already selected when you first get in the garage, so just press **A**

You see a list of th ngs to buy with CARGO PODS high ghted

2 Press **A** four t mes to buy four cargo pods

You should now have a total of **5** cargo pods you start with one already on your ship.

We suggest buying shields, armor, and a tri-cannon from the WEAPONS department here before you leave to protect yourse f against any host le alien encounters

3 Press **B** to eave the menu

5.6 NAME YOUR SHIP

You must name your ship before you can leave Starport.

1 Highlight NAME and press **A**

2 Name your ship and press **B**

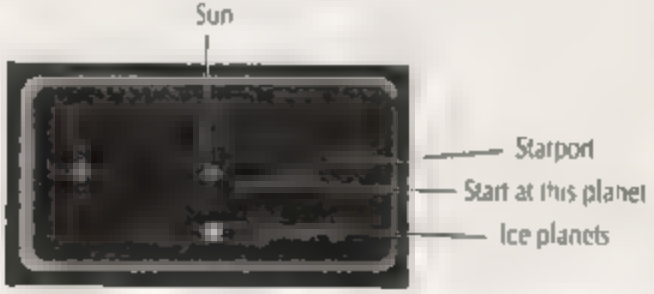
3 Press **C** to leave Ship Construction

5.7 LEAVE STARPORT

1) Press **C** at anytime you're in the Starport hallway to go directly to the Docking Bay

2) Press **A** to launch on your adventure

5.8 FIND A PLANET



Locate a planet to land on. Start in your own system, choose the brown planet (planet number one) closest to the sun to begin mining and exploration.

You must establish orbit before you can land.

To establish orbit, D-Pad **UP** and **RIGHT**, or **UP** and **LEFT** when you are over a planet's center

5.9 LANDING

Landing takes a little practice at first, but once you get the hang of it, it's a piece of cake.

NOTE: Before you land you may want to take a sensor reading and analyze the planet's elements.

To land,

1. Press **C** to bring up the crewmember's menu.
2. Select NAVIGATOR and press **A**.
3. Select LAND and press **A**.

   Your Navigator presents you with a map of the planet's surface so you can choose landing coordinates.

   To choose your landing coordinates:

3. D-Pad any direction to move the cursor on your map to the place you want to land.
4. Press **A** to begin descent.
5. As you fall toward the planet, press **A** to slow your descent.

   D-Pad **UP** for forward thrust and coast just above the planet's surface.

6. Press and release **A** until you're close to the ground.

   At this point you may want to fly low over the terrain to visually search for outcroppings or ruins. D-Pad **UP** and press **A** to adjust height and forward thrust as you scan the terrain.

7. Release **A** to touch down.

5.10 MINING A PLANET

In the beginning of your missions you'll need revenue. Mine the planet you've just landed on. Then return to Starport's Trade Depot to sell the minerals. If you see any lifeforms, shoot them from your Terrain Vehicle just until they're stunned enough to stop moving, then drive over them to pick them up. Some can be very valuable. Hint: ice planets are ice-bearers in *this* system.

Mineral Scan initiates a scan for minerals over the surface on your view screen. Minerals underground appear in various patches of shades ranging from light yellow to red. **Light yellow** indicates a high density of minerals. **Red** indicates a low density. REMEMBER, each time you do a mineral scan, it uses 10 units of fuel.

NOTE! You can't move during a mineral scan, so save fuel by studying each scan carefully and remembering where patches are located.

To do a mineral scan,

1) Select MINERAL SCAN and press **A**.
2) Press **C** to leave the scan.
3) Drive to where the mineral patches appeared and press **B** to dig.

For more information about mining, see section 4.2.2.

Don't run out of fuel when you're looking for minerals! Return to the mother ship to unload your Terrain Vehicle's cargo and refuel. At this point you may want to move the mother ship to a new mineral rich location and search there.

5.11 LAUNCHING

When you are ready to get off the planet and return to Starport with your minerals, press and hold **A** to lift off until you're orbiting the planet again

5.12 GETTING BACK TO STARPORT

When you are orbiting the planet, wait until your ship is angled toward Starport, then D-Pad **UP** and press **A** to break orbit and fly the direction you chose

When you are orbiting Starport, Select LAND from your navigator's menu and press **A**. You are automatically re-docked with Starport

5.13 TRADE AND SELL MINERALS

Now watch your hard work turn into hard cash!

1 Walk to the Trade Depot and enter

2 Select SELL then press **A**.

A list of all cargo you have appears.

To sell something, just highlight it and press **A**. Use the D-Pad to enter an amount to sell, press **B** to confirm the sales, then buy more Endurium (fuel) using the BUY option, or press **C** to leave the Trade Depot.

5.14 UPGRADE YOUR SHIP

Walk to the Ship Construction garage and upgrade your ship.

- Get a higher class of armor, shields, or engines
- Buy more weapons
- Upgrade your Terrain Vehicle

When you're done making improvements, press **B** to leave any menus you were in, then press **C** to exit Ship Construction.

Get Ready! Next you're leaving the solar system!

5.15 LEAVE THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The Starmap poster that came with your game is a complete map of the Starflight universe. Use it to choose a specific direction you want to travel once you're outside the solar system.

To leave the solar system, just fly off the edge of the solar system map!

5.16 TRY TO CONTACT ALIENS

Communicating with aliens is vital to getting almost all important information. Communication isn't always easy, so you have to carefully gauge which posture to use under each circumstance. For more information about communicating with aliens, see section 3.1.2.

Encounters with aliens are random. Fly through space until your scanners detect an unidentified object. Press **C** to see it.

When you first encounter aliens, their ships all look alike until your Science Officer takes a sensor reading. When the type of ship has been identified, you can see the ship in its natural form.

To establish communication,

1. Press **C** to bring up the crewmembers menu.
2. Select COMMUNICATIONS then press **A**.

3 Select HAIL then press **A**.

NOTE! If aliens communicate with you first, the communication officer's menu displays RESPOND instead of HAIL.

4 Select a posture to communicate with, press **A** to communicate, then press **C** to clear the message from your screen.

Experiment with different postures until you discover the most effective approach for each race. Make notes of any information you receive during each encounter, including information on the success or failure of a particular posture. Once you develop friendly relations with a race, they remember you and respond well to inquiry.

For more information about communication and aliens, see section 3.1.2.

5.17 COMBAT

Attacking an alien race often hinders information gathering. In most cases, it pays to be friendly.

Some alien vessels are impervious to certain kinds of weapons, so even a direct hit may have no effect.

To enter combat, order your Navigator to raise the shields and arm the weapons!

1. Select NAVIGATOR from the crewmember menu, then press **A**.
2. Select RAISE SHIELDS then press **A**.
3. Get back into the NAVIGATOR menu, select ARM WEAPONS, then press **A**.

4. When you're ready press **A** to fire

If you have more than one weapon, press **B** to cycle through the available weapon types.

To pick up debris when you destroy an alien spacecraft press **C** to stay in the encounter then fly over the wreckage to pickup any minerals left after the blast.

Remember to lower your shields and disarm your weapon immediately after combat. If you encounter another alien race with your defenses up they'll consider you hostile and attack

GOOD LUCK CAPTAIN, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN

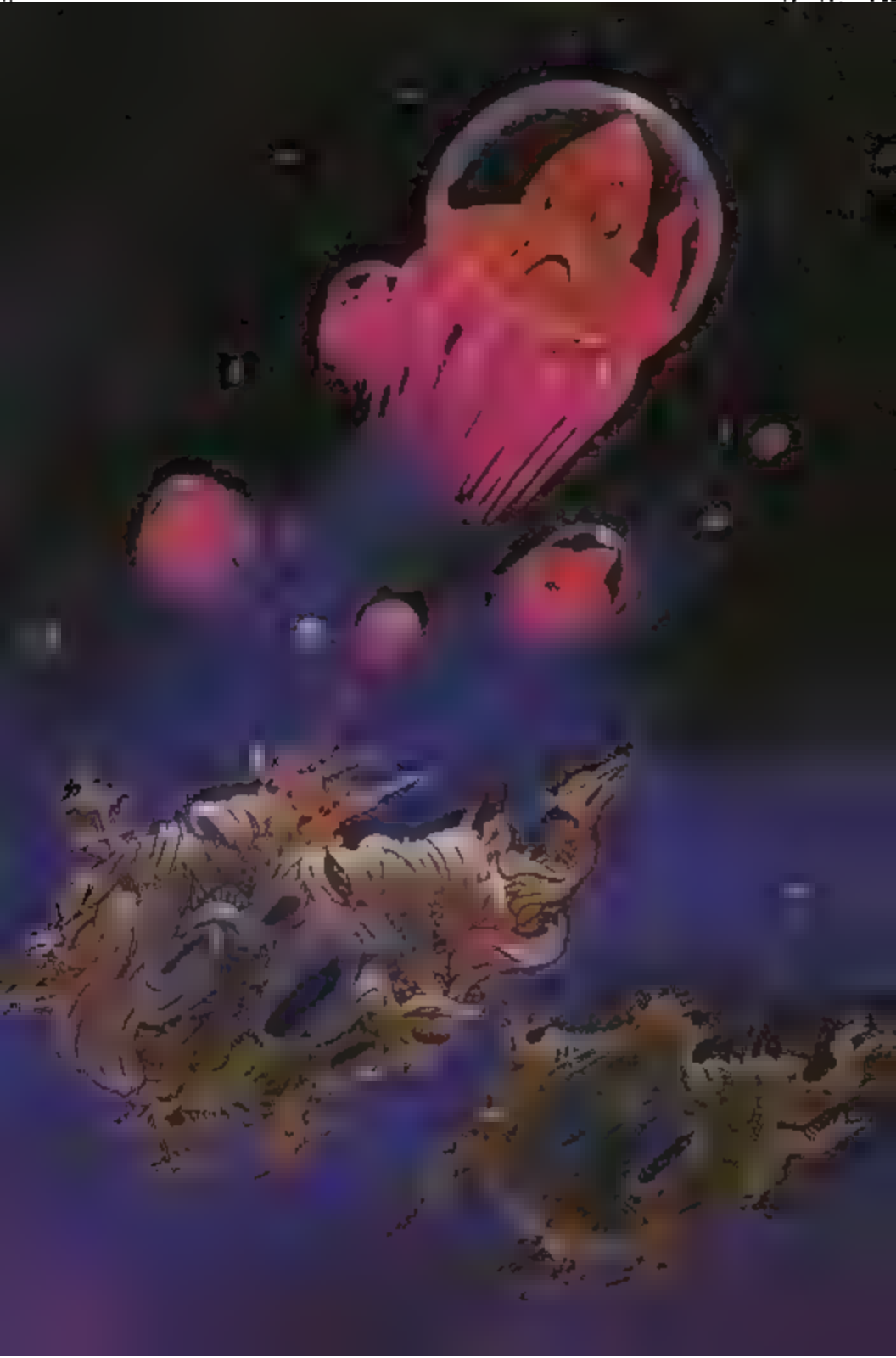
The Elowan are a gentle peace-loving race. They reproduce once a year when their heads become filled with seed and create "headfruit." According to the Elowan, the ancient rift between the Elowan and Thrynn began (and continues) because of the Thrynn's love of Elowan children — headfruit is a Thrynn delicacy.

If you have difficulty communicating with an Elowan, it's probably because you've previously attacked them, have a Thrynn on board, or befriended or traded with the Thrynn in the recent past.

The Thrynn are cunning reptiles not to be trusted. When dealing with the Thrynn assume a friendly posture. They may attack if you have an Elowan aboard your ship, or if you have been friendly with the Elowan recently. The only solution to this kind of encounter with the Thrynn is to destroy them.

Mechans are the guardian robots of a planet called "Heaven". Guarding the system for a millennium, the Mechans have been waiting for the transports from Old Earth during the Noah 9 exodus to bring the human survivors of a system flare a millennium ago.

When you encounter Mechans, answer their questions in as friendly a posture as you can muster. Convince them that you are with the Old Noah expedition and they may open their memory banks to you!



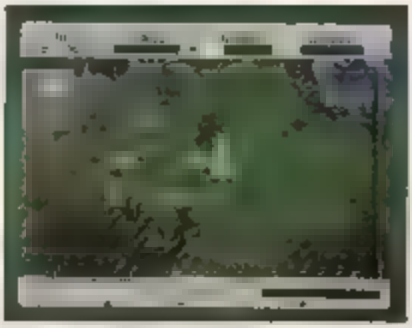
[redacted] a very religious race and believe themselves [redacted] keepers of the galaxy. We have tried all possible [redacted] but nothing has been able to arrest their [redacted] of activity.

[redacted] heavily armed and generally haven't attacked [redacted] unprovoked.

Veloxi are difficult to communicate with at first because of their tedious obsequious manner. They know a good deal about alien races if you know how to question them. They speak very highly of their relations to the ancients. We have found a good deal of their information regarding the Ancients to be untrue.

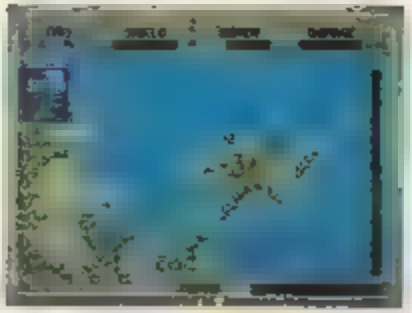
The Minstrels are space-faring poets known for their beauteous renditions of history through their verse. Pay attention to their poems for hints about the Ancients. Listen to them for a general overview of the events throughout time and the current situation in the universe.

The Spemin have been most helpful with providing information about other races. They have a very superior attitude, and we have found that aggressive hostility against their threats triggers a favorable response.



Most Magnificent Hexagon

City of the Ancients



Ruins on Old Earth

The Staff Constellation

The Axe Constellation

The Four Seedlings

The following log provides clues and a general path that one Captain followed for success. If you want to perform your mission without help or hints, ignore section 6.

6 - The Captain's Log, Noah 2 Expedition: PROJECT FLYING DUTCHMAN

17-11-4619

Security Class 1A Starship Commanders

No doubt you have heard the rumors regarding the "ghost ship" that was discovered last week at 175 94. The ship was towed to the Interstel drydock and thoroughly examined. The results of that examination were astounding.

The ship, called the ISS Intrepid, is of a design *not yet in production* by Interstel. It is a new spacecraft design in the final production stage at Interstel's Research & Development branch. It is an estimated 4 to 5 months before this prototype ship is ready for test launch.

The ship was badly damaged and there were no life forms aboard. The escape pod was missing.

Several maps and flux listings are the only navigational data that survived the Intrepid's final journey intact. The Captain's log is nearly complete — as far as we can tell.

The Captain's Log

The dates in the Captain's log start on 14-05-4620 — five and a half months in the future. This fact and the design of the ship indicates that the Intrepid has time-traveled backward to now. The content of the Captain's log is included here in

The log contains much useful information about neighboring stars, planets, and fellow sentients, but more importantly reveals important clues as to the cause of the stellar flares that endanger our galaxy.

This report is classified. It has been distributed to only a few of Interstel's best starship commanders. The reason for this is that the captain of the ISS Intrepid, Max Zarfleen, is at this time a newly graduated Interstel captain from New Oxford University at Pellnorat, Arth. He has already been chosen as the best possible captain of the prototype — also known as the ghost ship. No hint of this information can be leaked because it will create a hiccup in time that will make it impossible for Zarfleen to return.

THIS MUST BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS.

Your ultimate objective? Seek out and destroy the cause of the stellar flares.

May the Rock of Truth shine brightly upon you.

Terrence Willwater

Director, Interstel

ISS INTREPID: CAPTAIN'S LOG

Stardate 14-05-4620 16:22.06

I should've hired a more experienced crew I should've known that testing a prototype like the Intrepid would require a better crew than my roommates at the academy. My crew are rookies, but have high aptitudes. I hope that, plus our collective ingenuity, will be enough to see us through this mission.

We stocked up on supplies and endurium fuel before we left. For luck, we bought the two remaining artifacts at the Trade Depot, a whining orb and a flat device. I'll have Science Officer McGuin analyze these when we're in space to see if they have any real use.

FLAT DEVICE

WHINING ORB

My crew may lack experience, but we know what we want. We're on a mission for MU's, so we're off to mine the first planet in our own system. Science Officer McGuin tells me that there are some serious minerals to be found there.

Captain's log, Stardate 26-05-4620 21:01.58

We are due to dock with Starport in less than an hour. Our first trip out was successful — we nearly filled all our cargo pods. Glad we bought extras before we left. With minerals found on the first planet of our home system, the fifth planet of the neighboring system and the outermost planet of the nearby system at 123 1.0°.

We recorded a message in an old ruin that had a little leftover endurium glowing around the bases of its columns. It is a clue pointing to a possible colony or base in another system. We discovered the ruin on the second planet of our neighboring system, at the coordinates mentioned in Notices on Starport.

Navigator Phenoct and Engineer Velutixi make an incredibly competent mining team. Those Velox can communicate instantly over mind channels. To ask about them is a serious breach of etiquette, so I allow my two insect companions to maintain their privacy.

For balance, I have two Elowan aboard Falerion: our communications officers is excellent at solving any minor disagreements. Betham, our mouthy medical officer, keeps us entertained with jokes.

Captain's log, Stardate 27-05-4620 09:01 37

We received a fair price for the minerals at Starport enough to upgrade our engines two classes and purchase more endurium. Considering the price paid for it, collecting endurium has become top priority.

22:48.16

We're flying faster on less fuel these days. The upgraded engines make a world of difference. We ran into a flux at 128 105 that transported us to 146 112. It took Phenoct hours to determine our location. Advanced navigator training is our next order of business at Starport.

We encountered androids calling themselves "Mechan 9". When I told them we weren't "Noah 9" they tried to roast our photonic transfers! Without weapons or defenses, we retreated faster than you could say "banana on the beefsteak".

Captain's log, Stardate 28-05-4620 08:56.44

We found [illegible] and endurium at 36N x 90E on the fifth planet of the nearby system at 145 107. Encountered more Mechans here, this must be their territory. Until we learn how to deal with them, the Intrepid will avoid contact.

25:51.13

Fully unspin and encountered several Velox. Phenoct informed me that since we were in Velox territory, I would be [illegible] the respect they requested. The Velox are very responsive to obsequiousness, so I bow over often when communicating with them, more out of nausea than respect.

When I asked them for general information they told me of an Old Empire distress call and gave me coordinates for an artifact in the Axe constellation. Maintaining good relations with alien races is vitally important. Very valuable information can be gained by friendliness, however insincere.

Captain's log, Stardate 26-05-4620 04:23.32

We discovered a planet guarded by a mysterious satellite just between Veloxi and Mechanite territory. Found another one guarding the innermost planet of the upper system of the two nearby. The planets must be of great value if someone went to the trouble [illegible] them, judging from their structure, we think they are Veloxi. The probe questioned us with a series of numbers, but we couldn't crack the code. As I sit and write this now, I recall that the Veloxi hold the number six in very high regard. Maybe that's the answer to the code. Hm.

Found a flux at [illegible] that took us to 128,143. This was very near the location of a planet referred to in a message we found in some ruins on the second planet of system 123,101. We proceeded to the fourth planet of the system 118,146 and found a simple looking dodecahedron in a ruin at 16S x 20W.

D[illegible]

We recorded an old message that referred to a stolen alien scanning device of some sort. The thief's trail leading to system 68,66. We recommended this world for colonization.

Captain's log, Stardate 22-06-4620 15:18.55

We got into a hostile encounter on our way back to Starport and our weapons wouldn't work! When we analyzed the Dodecahedron we figured it out. I think we'll sell it to the Thrynn...

We badly needed funds to pay for advanced accelerated training for Navigator Phenoct and Communications Officer Faerion, so we sold it at the Trade Depot. We upgraded the Intrepid with revenue from the planetary recommendation and now we have great engines, basic weapons and defensive capabilities.

We'll depart for our next journey after the crew has had some shore leave.

Captain's log, Stardate 29-06-4620 23:42.02

Phenoct easily found a flux at 126,87 that looks as very near the coordinates of the distress call the Velox told us about. We found ourselves at 173,88, the other end of the flux, and proceeded to locate the source of the distress beacon, which was in orbit around the first planet of system 175,94.

Following directions from the beacon, we discovered the answer to the Intractable Mechans. They are androids sent out to prepare worlds for Noah, a colonization project of the

Old Empire. After preparing the colony world of "Heaven" they have been awaiting the Noah 9 colonists for over a thousand years. The colonists never arrived due to ship malfunction which forced them to make an emergency landing on this planet. The suspected reason for the malfunction was sabotage.

Science Officer McGuin feels that this planet is suitable for colonization so we're logging it.

Captain's log, Stardate 05-07-4620 20:34.21

We explored the area thoroughly until an imminent stellar flare forced us to leave. McGuin is to be commended on his recognition of the condition of the star — without his warning, Interstellar would have been minus one prototype starship. We identified and tracked several pulsars and added them to our growing collection of navigational data. We discovered an unusual four star cluster at 164 85 and within the cluster we found a planet we recommended for colonization.

Returning to Starport.

Captain's log, Stardate 25-07-4620 10:12.34

All of my crew are now trained to the maximum level of expertise. The Intrepid now has battle capabilities and better engines. Our next mission? Find the Mechans and communicate.

Captain's log, Stardate 28-07-4620 23:24.03

We convinced the Mechans that we were Noah 9

As we approached system 14b 107 we encountered Mechans. This time we convinced them that we were Group 9 from the Noah Expedition, we did not worship Layton and that it was all right to go from code blue to code red. They couldn't answer our questions fast enough.

Turns out the Noah Project was a desperate attempt on the part of a group of scientists who called themselves "The Institute" to save the human species from destruction. These scientists were convinced of the existence of an encroaching "Dead Zone," an increased instability in stars coreward. The Institute sent out android groups to identify and prepare underground colonies on habitable worlds, and then to protect the surrounding area until the colonists arrived. The fourth planet of this system, Heaven, is the planet the Mechans have been guarding. Since its value to those who have been dead for 1,200 years is questionable, we'll claim it instead. We figured that this world will be acceptable for a colonization recommendation. After all, someone has been keeping this planet warm for us for over a thousand years.

We'll explore the two planets guarded by some kind of orbiting drone that the Mechans don't know anything about.

The Mechans told us that the old Sol system is in a constellation called Pythagoras, along with a system named Mordan. We are curious to discover whether or not Old Earth really exists.

Momentarily, we'll leave for Starport.

Captain's log, Stardate 04-08-4620 11:49.55

The intrepid has been fitted with the finest, fastest engines available from Interstel. We depart in the morning to investigate the probes.

Captain's log, Stardate 10-08-4620 22:12.49

We returned to the mysterious planets guarded by orbiting probes. These are Veloxi devices — indeed, this is Veloxi territory. After much obsequious posturing, to the great delight of Phenoct, and Velufixi, who did not bother to confine their snickers to the hive-mind frequencies, we finally managed to establish friendly relations with the Velox, who lowered their shields and gave us much information.

To get past the guard drones we need to give correct answers to the drones' questions. Correct answers are always a multiple of six, a holy number to the Velox. In the days of the Old Empire, the Velox had what they called an "focusing stone," which the queen used to communicate with her drones.

FOCUSING STONE

The stone was stolen by a space pirate named Harrison, and the Velox had to resort to the much less efficient hyperwave frequencies for communication. If only I had it in my possession, I would turn it over to them.

Captain's log, Stardate 13-08-4620 20:34:31

We visited Sphexi at 132 165 and while there picked up a great deal of endurium and a pretty bauble, a crystal orb. I am uncertain as to the wisdom or morality of stealing from friends, but my crew reminded me that our mission is to save all races from destruction, and that we should keep the orb because it may help us to complete our mission. I followed their advice, and we fled Velox space. Now I wonder if the Velox will be telling people that pirate Max Zarfleen who stole their "small egg."

We proceeded to the Velox drone-guarded planets McCain recommended both as good colony worlds, so we logged them. On the first planet at 143 115 we discovered something of interest. In some Old Empire ruins, we found an odd stone resembling a black egg at 28N x 4E.

BLACK EGG

CRYSTAL ORB

and a message containing the coordinates of headquarters on Old Earth at 56N x 16W located on a planet called Mardan Two. We then returned to Heaven where we mined to our heart's content. We're on our way to Starport to sell the mineral booty.

Captain's log, Stardate 19-08-4620 11:54.23

We sold our minerals, but the black egg we'll keep along with the crystal orb. They look nice on the dash of the Intrepid.

There were some odd references to the "Cross" constellation in Starport notices. Next stop: The Cross. Aboard.

Captain's log, Stardate 29-08-4620 23:34.11

Faerion, our peace-loving Elowan, expressed concern as we were about to take the continuum flux found at 11a 10? She told us that the Cross constellation at the other end of the flux is the territory of the Cazurtoids, a hostile bunch of holy joes. The Elowan have discovered that the only way to deal with this race safely and peacefully is to enter their space unarmed, shields down, and communicate with them in a respectful manner, taking care to not offend. It is a difficult decision, but if evasive action is impossible I'll follow Faerion's advice.

The Intrepid emerged into Gazurtoid space surrounded by hostile ships. Retreat was impossible. Before entering the flux we had lowered our shields and disarmed our weapons, and now we attempted to communicate using an extremely

obsequious posture. It worked! After preaching at us awhile, and foretelling of our ignoble demise, they left us alone.

We then took one of the many fluxes here — this area is a sort of grand flux junction. Phenocti chose the one at 101.77, just below the yellow G-class star of the cross. This deposited us in Spemin territory, at 61.131. By this time we were fed up with being obsequious and blasted two of their ships into the Spemin afterlife. When we dropped out of combat to hail the remaining ship, we found her to be quite polite and willing to share some useful information with us.

They told us of a great "City of the Ancients" in a nebula just outward of their home planet, upspin and outward of our present position. After rummaging through the debris of the blasted ships for anything useful, we took our leave of the Spemin ship.

Captain's log, Stardate 02-09-4620 18:53.19

We followed the Spemin's directions and found ourselves in a medium-sized nebula liberally sprinkled with fluxes. In system 56.144 we found three ice planets. On one of these planets we found the Ancient City. It was an archaeologist's paradise, and the ruins here have much to tell interstel specialists. We picked up the huge deposits of endurium and a crystal pearl.

CRYSTAL PEARL

Captain's log, Stardate 06-09-4620 02:46.22

We limp home after nearly losing our ship and our lives to the most hostile and deadly race in the galaxy. After taking a series of flukes that brought us far Outward, we were attacked by a single Uhlek vessel. We had heard of them from other races, but were still unprepared for their uncompromising ferocity. They refused to acknowledge our friendly hail, and we'd barely time to raise our shields before the first strike blasted our hull. This hit destroyed our combat maneuver capabilities, and the second strike badly injured my crew.

I took the helm and dropped us out of combat to try to maneuver away, but suddenly there was a brilliant flash of light from the crystal pearl on our dashboard. We were whisked out of Uhlek territory to safety by that little thing. There's no way the Thrynn are getting that.

It looks like we're going to make it to Starport for medical attention and repairs. Medical Officer Bethamial is the most wounded of my crew, and seems to be in great pain. Her wails are ringing in my ears as I write this. Damn the Uhleks!

Captain's log, Stardate 07-09-4620 11:16.25

Thank the Rock of Truth! Bethamial lives. She needs time in the Photosynthesis Lounge, but she'll be back in action soon. I know it is improper to refer to an Elowan as "he" or "she," but the impersonal "it" seems to rob a sentient of his or her soul.

Falerion, Phenoch, and Vetulix are being released from the medical facility as we speak, but we'll wait for Bethamial before we continue.

Captain's log, Stardate 14-09-4620 21:49.44

Bethamial has returned to her duties. The Intrepid is being outfitted with the finest weapons and shields available, and will be ready to depart from Starport in the morning. We're heading downspin and coreward into Elowan and Thrynn territory.

Captain's log, Stardate 04-10-4620 19:31.24

The Elowan we've encountered were too busy preparing for their "Harvest Festival" to talk with us at any length. When I asked Falerion and Bethamial about it, they were too proud to explain what the Harvest Festival is. I imagine it has something to do with the highly secret reproductive rituals of the Elowan.

To be able to communicate with the Thrynn we will have to return to Starport and let Bethamial and Falerion take a short leave. The Thrynn would never talk to us if they knew Elowan were on board the Intrepid. We'll hire a Thrynn communications officer for this trip.

Captain's log, Stardate 06-10-4620 23:18.59

We discovered a potential colony world at 144 44 and logged it for Interstel's research We met many Thrynn ships and established profitable communications with them right away. Thank goodness they responded to a friendly posture any more obsequiousness and Phenoct and Vetut xi would have mutinied!

The Thrynn offered to buy our crystal pearl at a very good price, but the crew agreed against giving it up We asked them about other races and they told of a possible location for the planet that held the ruins of Harrison's old base We found the ruins in the Staff constellation at 180 124, planet 2, 59N x 22E

The Thrynn have told us a great deal about valuable artifacts scattered over the galaxy They offered us ridiculously high sums of money — I call 200 000 MC a lot to purchase any we found They told us of a flux at 98 79 to take out of the Cross constellation

SHIMMERING BALL

"That my friennnndsss will take you to a sysssstem that ssss said that the shhhimerrrr ng balll sss there" I knew what was coming next.

"Bring it to usss and we will reward you well." Uh-huh. I didn't trust them as far as I could throw them.

As I turned to leave, I heard the Thrynn whispering about a ring device available on Old Mars in the Sol system at 215 86. I grinned and walked out planning our eventual trip to Mars.

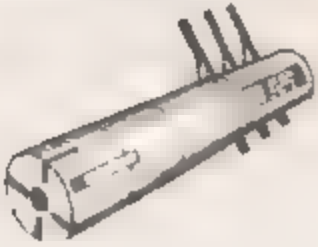
23:58.55

We're headed to what we think is the Stait constellation to find the answer. A vertical row of three stars on the starmap sparkles just upspin and coreward of Starport.

Captain's log, Stardate 12-10-4620 14:37:39

We were right. That was the stait constellation. We've explored all three systems and found ruins with information about the Elowanian homeworld, tons of endurium, and a document written by The Institute theorizing about the cause of the flaring stars on the innermost planet of the downspin system at 180,120.

On the second planet of the upspin system at 180 124, we explored ruins and I we came across some clues that led us to two abandoned bases used by Harrison. In one ruin at 59N x 22E we found a strange rod shaped object, and in the other at 54N x 13E some clues as to where Harrison might have gone.



ROD DEVICE

Once back in space we encountered a starship of an unusual design but it warped into hyperspace before we had a chance to hail it. I checked our instruments to see if we were sending a signal that might have scared them away and our lasers were almost doubled in strength. I think we'll hang onto this rod device for awhile.

We entered a nearby system and and began our usual exploration scanning of our solar system map when the hull temperature alarm started beeping. I've never seen a Vega move so fast.

"PHENOCTI! Get us out of here! She's overheating." I peered out the front window and felt heat cooking the left half of my face. I slapped the outer armor control button to cover the windows and as we jumped out of that solar system Vetutix took one look at me and broke out in annoying buzz-laughter.

"What're you laughing at!?" I yelled.

"It's true big Captain!" I looked in the mirror and saw the bright red heat-burn over the left half of my face. "You're most half-baked!!"

When the crew settled back down I thumbed through my copies of Starport notices for any information about the

system that cooked us. Yep just as I thought.

"Hey, folks, listen up." He, at least, sound like a Captain. "That over we were just in. It's the same system I read about in notices on Starport. This says several ships have disappeared there. Let's skip that joint until we know more about it."

Phenoch discovered two fluxes near the Staff constellation. We flew into the one at 176, 123 which dumped us only eight sectors away from the Sol system. Damn I'm glad we invested in those extra Navigator's lessons.

Captain's log, Stardate 17-10-4620 23:55:12

Luck is riding in the driver's seat these days. We found the constellation Pythagoras and the Sol system inside it. Old Earth smiled at us as we flew into her orbit.

She's the [illegible] planet of system 215.86, and an excellent colony [illegible] there at [illegible] we found a cube-shaped [illegible] previous alien encounters on our [illegible] coordinates.

of headq[illegible] On

Mars, the fourth planet in the Sol system, we found the ring device right where the Thrynn said it.

RING DEVICE

would be at 90 N x 0 W.E. Glad we had the [illegible] from space Mars appears to be a [illegible] masses a [illegible]. The tiny island [illegible] impossible to detect. We [illegible] system for colonization [illegible] the inhabitants will adapt.

Captain's log, Stardate 19-10-4620 22:45:49

We flew to Mardan [illegible] the second planet of system 217.88 and conducted some interesting but non-profitable exploration. On Mardan Four, the fourth planet of the same system, we mined an incredible amount of plutonium, and nearly doubled our projected profit by recommending the planet for colonization.

Captain's log, Stardate 24-10-4620 15:30:06

Conducted some further exploration of the area and discovered another black egg on the second planet of system

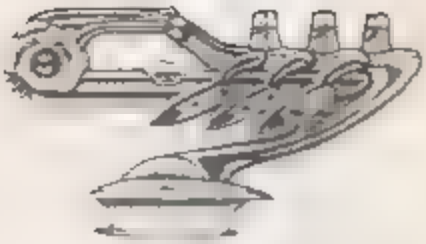
234.20 at 35S x 99E in the constellation known as "The Axe."

BLACK EGG

I added the egg to our pirate booty, then shot the flux at 179.52, which spit us into Thryno space. This proved remarkably fortunate, since the Thryno pay twice as much for plutonium as Starport, and our holds are filled with it.

On the old Elowanian homeworld, the second planet of system 129.33, we found the ruins of an institute outpost at 60S x 45E. After reading through what little information remains in this once magnificent place, we found references to a Red Cylinder and a Tesseract, with clues to their locations.

RED CYLINDER



TESSERACT

We are returning home to Starport for some much needed shore leave before pursuing these leads.

Captain's log, Stardate 10-11-4620 19:45.51

Bothamal and Falerion have rejoined the crew. Everyone feels rested and tomorrow the Intrepid departs for Elowan space to gather information from the Elowan.

Captain's log, Stardate 12-11-4620 23:03.17

The Elowan wouldn't speak to us. They said they could smell the stench of a Friend of the Thrynn from 4 parsecs and would we please leave! We flew into Thrynn space and the lizards took a couple of potshots at us — nothing we didn't expect. We returned fire and took cover back in Elowan space.

I guess the unspoken rule is get shot by a Thrynn befriend Elowan because suddenly the Elowan were speaking to us again. "We met Friends of the Elowan." Wish they'd make up their minds.

Once they were friendly they gave us much information

about the Ancients as well as the general galactic situation. In addition, they recited to us an Eowanian children's rhyme that provides the key to the location of the star Akteron, the home system of the institute. Akteron, ready or not, here we come.

Captain's log, Stardate 16-11-4620 18:41:58

Using information that we received from a chance encounter with the Mechans, we found the institute at 73S x 66E on the sixth planet of the Akteron system. I think I know the secret of the flaring stars, and I know what has to be done to stop the process. There is one thing we need to collect before we can carry out the solution — a device known as the "crystal cone."

CRYSTAL CONE

When should the survival of one species take precedence over another? And who has the right to decide? I'll get an answer soon — the crystal cone lies protected within a black space. We are returning to Starport to prepare for our next journey.

Captain's log, Stardate 18-11-4620 16:42.44

Had a stimulating conversation with my old Science professor. He is convinced that huge amounts of endurium, when ignited by an explosion could propel a starship through time. He says it has something to do with the very nature of endurium. It has puzzled him for some time that endurium crystals behave erratically, quite different from other crystals. Of course, this behavior is what makes superphoton travel possible.

Theoretically there is no limit to the capabilities of superphoton travel, and with enough endurium time travel is possible. I had to take leave of my old friend before I blurted out what I think I have discovered. What would he have said had I told him my thoughts about the true nature of endurium?

Captain's log, Stardate 20-11-4620 23:19.29

My crew decided that dealing with the Uniteks might be easier with the aid of the "shimmering ball" we have heard about. From information found in ruins on various planets we've pinpointed its location as the first planet of system 68,66.

After endless searching on this watery world we finally found a message that led us to the ruins containing the scanning device. We will search these coordinates tomorrow.

Captain's log, Stardate 22-11-4620 21:42.11

We found the shimmering ball at 12N x 32E. We flew into Sperm space and buzzed them into revealing a series of three fluxes that will take us straight to Unitek territory. The

coordinates of the fluxes are:

106,139 to 65,181

64,186 to 31,184

35,186 to 23,199

We aren't flying there right away, however. The Velox helped us a lot during this mission, so we're throwing a party in their honor.

Captain's log, Stardate 24-11-4620 18:33.16

We invited our old friends the Velox on board for the festivities.

They delighted in swapping off-color jokes with Bethamia, and even invited us to visit Sphex, their holy planet and the home of the "Most Magnificent Hexagon". We are headed there next.

After looking at the starmap, we flew to the first in the series of fluxes that the Spemin gave us, and got to 20,198 in no time. According to the Spemin, that should put us in Uhlek territory. We proceed with caution.

So far so good. The first planet of system 20,198 contained the crystal cone at the coordinates given to us by the Elowan (2SS x 55W). We collected endurium here, and will depart for the crystal planet in the morning. I'm positive that the planet we seek is the strange planet that caused our hull to overheat.

Captain's log, Stardate 25-11-4620 14:59.32

As we left orbit after finding the crystal cone we were attacked before we had a chance to retaliate. If only we had acted with more speed!

The Intrepid has been nearly destroyed by Uhlek warships. My crew's bodies litter the bridge. I am letting the ship drift while the Uhleks prepare to board. Using one of the black eggs in the case on the bridge for a detonator and the pods of engorium for fuel, I rigged up a timed explosion that should, if my good professor was correct, blast the Intrepid through time. If only there were a way to ensure the direction of travel and distance. I can only hope that my ship will serve as a warning to the past or historical treasure to the future. Even if the engorium simply blows my ship to hell, at least the Uhleks lose.

If this log is being read by sentients in my past, it is important that you know the following:

- To stop the stellar flares you must have the crystal cone to neutralize the defenses of the crystal planet at 15, 17.
- You must have the crystal cone to identify the control nexus of the planet.
- You must find the third and last black egg, an explosive device of deadly magnitude.

BLACK EGG

You must land on the crystal planet and drop the black egg on its control nexus to destroy it. I wish I had time for more detail, but the Uniekslare preparing to board. If this information makes no sense to you, preserve it for those who will benefit from it.

My [illegible] and by those in my future, obliterate the Uniek murderers. At present I'm departing in the shuttlecraft, but [illegible]. For company I have the other small black egg. I [illegible] before what I know now [illegible] would have [illegible] Brain World that the Thrynn spoke of, and would have left the egg there. No use crying over spilled milk.

Captain out

7 - APPENDICES

7.1 Planetary Charts

7.1.1 Mineral Value Chart

Mineral	Value in Units per Percent of Volume
Lead	40
Iron	60
Cobalt*	80
Nickel	100
Copper	120
Zinc	140
Molybedenum*	160
Tin	180
Magnesium	200
Aluminum*	220
Titanium*	240
Chromium	260
Antimony	280
Promethium*	300
Mercury	320
Tungsten	340
Silver	360
Gold	380
Platinum	400
Plutonium	420
Rodnium	440
Endurium	1000

* Minerals that are needed on board so your Engineer can repair the ship.

7.1.2 Lifeform Chart

When you capture a creature, check your inventory to see what kind it is, then [illegible] for future reference.

	COLOR	SHAPE	MONETARY VALUE (at Starport)	HABITAT (Type of Planet)	OTHER
AERODACTYLE					
AMORPHOX					
ASPECT					
BIVING					
BRISTLEBARB					
CRAWLEYE					
DRAGGIN					
GIGANTOK					
MAGMATOID					
MEGAPEDE					
NAUTOID					
OCTAPEDE					
ORBULA					
SLUGYTE					
SPINSTER					
TERMODE					
TURBLADE					
WINGWRAITH					
WORMONGER					
ZEEB					

7.2 Flux Loc

XY	XY
7 94	71 64
9 16	135 84
5 135	54 146
22 22	25 48
23 199	1 186
25 48	22 9
31 84	64 186
35,186	23 199
51,132	55,145
53,143	58,140
54,143	71,151
54,146	15,13
55 99	248 1
55 145	51,132
55 146	59,144
56 142	40,146
58 140	53,143
59 144	55,146
60,146	56,142
61,131	101,77

XY	XY
64,186	31,184
65,181	106,139
69,66	98,79
71,84	7,94
71,151	54 143
93,62	97 76
95,82	150,96
97 76	93,62
98 79	69 66
101 77	61 131
101 83	142 51
104,82	118,107
106,139	65 181
109 204	234 167
118,107	104 82
123,127	128,143
126,87	173,88
128 24	179,52
128 105	146,112
128,143	123,127
130,108	173,61
135,84	9,16

XY	XY
142,51	101,83
146,112	128 105
148,166	170,93
150,96	95,82
170,93	148,166
173,61	130 108
173 88	126,87
176,123	217 80
[illegible]	189 190
179 52	128,24
180 52	232,40
180 86	237,153
189,190	178,127
190,28	194,134
194,134	190,28
217,80	176,123
229,148	235,49
232,40	180,52
234,167	109,204
235,49	229,148
237,153	180 86
248,1	55,99

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